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"He keeps showing me a lot of little trucks coming up and being unloaded and going away again. • They are funny little trucks, not like the railway trucks you see here."

(See p. 228 — Leonard Silling)

THE VERDICT



STUDY OF THE PROBABLE ORIGIN OF CERTAIN PHYSIC
PHENOMENA TOGETHER WITH A RECORD OF
VERY INTERESTING PERSONAL
EXPERIENCES

TERTIUM QUID

WITH A PREFACE
by

H. A. DALLAS



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This Volume is dedicated, by permission, to

SIR OLIVER LODGE, F.R.S., D.Sc., I.L.D.,

As one who has unselfishly braved public prejudice and inevitable hostile criticism in order to proclaim what he felt to be the Truth, and to carry a message of consolation to those to whom it would present itself as such, without regard to his own feelings on deeply personal matters,

And as one to whom the Author owes a deep debt of gratitude,

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PREFACE

There has been during the last thirty years or so a steady growth of public attention to what are called Psychic Phenomena, meaning chiefly the phenomena reputed Spiritualistic. During the last five years, this attention has very greatly increased. The reason for the present intense interest in these matters is unhappily not far to seek.

On the one hand, atheism is practically a thing of the past, pure materialism is fast dying out, even among scientists, and passive agnosticism is being replaced among thoughtful people by a tendency to reconstruct their philosophy upon theistic lines. Nevertheless inability to accept the teachings of Christianity, as the solution of the "Riddle of the Universe," is slowly but steadily increasing. All this makes people willing and anxious to believe in a future state of existence, but the more determined to build no assured hopes upon it without definite scientific proof.

On the other hand, almost every family in England is mourning the loss of husband, father, brother or son, as the result of the war which has desolated the earth throughout the length and breadth of the land—of the Empire, rather. Hence the desire has come, insistent for certain knowledge whether all vivid young personalities have ceased to exist, have been annihilated,—or whether they continue to love, remember, plan, execute, in a word *live*, as before, and are merely separated from us temporarily. There are still enormous numbers.

especially of the older generation, who live by faith or are held by tradition, but the number of those who require scientific proof, and whom nothing less than that will satisfy, is, if not as large, certainly very considerable indeed, and is increasing daily.

When, therefore, a large body of people, evidently not by any means all foolish or credulous, people we know, people whose opinion in other matters we respect, say that they frequently and easily communicate with the Departed, whose continued existence they claim to have proved, and when many of the first scientists of the age declare that after careful investigation they are convinced that this communication does take place, and that this proof has been given, it is not to be wondered at that the keenest and most critical interest is displayed.

That the interest *is* critical, and that every inch of the ground should be disputed, is also not to be wondered at, still less regretted. It is an instinct of self-protection. Many of the critics say:— "I thought I had proof before, and I found that I had not: I shall be very careful before I make that mistake again." This may be irritating to those who have themselves fought inch by inch over the ground which they seem to have won, but it is nevertheless a thoroughly sound and healthy thing. It makes us all careful, and it enhances the value of anything which may finally be established.* The greater the importance of any purported new discovery to the human race, the greater the need of due caution before pronouncing it to be a truth.

These are the justifications for a book of this kind. Points of view, grounds of belief, grounds of disbelief, in such a matter as proof of Survival, are as many as are the varying types of the human mind. Arguments which convince one will leave another cold. Objections which appear to this cr, unanswerable seem to that one to be of little in

portance. Evidence that to one man amounts to proof, fails to satisfy his next-door neighbour. Also, every fresh piece of evidence adds to our knowledge.

Not only do the facts themselves react differently upon different minds, but so also does the manner of presentation. Who has not read or followed in court the evidence in some *cause célèbre*, and then read or heard the addresses by counsel? The counsel for the Crown reviews the evidence, and we feel that the prisoner is hanged already. The counsel for the accused reviews the same evidence, and we feel that a conviction would be a judicial murder. The judge calmly, lucidly, and dispassionately sums up, and . . . we are glad that we have been spared the heavy responsibility of membership of the jury. Some years ago, a man was twice tried for murder. In the first trial, one jurymen alone held out against all the others for an acquittal, and the case was retried. In the second trial, the jury again disagreed. Further proceedings were abandoned, and the case remains an unsolved mystery to this day.

In this book are presented certain facts as evidence, (Part 2,) certain general considerations of the various theories which have been put forward as explanations of facts of this nature, (Part 1,) and certain particular applications of these arguments to the facts themselves, (again Part 2.)

It has been the desire and the aim of the writer throughout to emulate neither the counsel for the prosecution nor the counsel for the defence, but to adhere to the dispassionate attitude of the judge—the ideal of British fairness and impartiality. If he has summed up on the whole, and with marked reservations, for one side, he has only done so on the evidence as it appears to him, and he has only done what a judge more often than not has to do.

But the most careful judge is human, and therefore fallible, and the verdict can only be decided by the

jury. Every reader of this book becomes *ipso facto* a jurymen, bound to deliver his verdict honestly according to the weight of the evidence, and he alone can decide authorship of these phenomena. Two rivals dispute, with serious pretensions, to have originated them. The one is the World of Departed Spirits; the other is the World of Living Minds. A third makes voluble and not entirely unsupported claims.

Gentlemen of the jury! After a few brief remarks as to certain personal factors which bear upon the value of my observation, I shall first invite you to examine with me the general character and claims of these rivals for the acknowledged authorship of the phenomena called mediumistic. I shall then put before you the evidence adduced in this particular case, with brief comment upon the more salient points in it. It will then be for you, as fair and impartial men, with a full sense of your grave responsibility and of the importance of the issue, to consider your verdict in the case of

“Telepathy and Others *versus* the Discarnate.”

INTRODUCTION

BY MISS H. A. DALLAS

Authoress of "Across the Barrier," and other works.

My friend Captain —— has asked me to write a few words as an introduction to his book. No introduction would be necessary but for the fact that circumstances oblige him to issue it under a pseudonym; he has explained these circumstances to me, and they seem to me entirely to justify his decision.

I am very glad to associate myself with his work for more than one reason; particularly because this book is one of a kind of which there cannot be too many. Those who think that Survival, and communication from those who have passed on, are already so amply proved that further evidence is not required, seem to me to be taking a short-sighted view of the subject. We have learned from events in the Great War that to consolidate a position is quite as necessary as to capture it; and for this reason it is very important to go on steadily accumulating facts which will completely establish the truth of Survival and the possibility of communication.

It was the steady cumulative work of Darwin (extending over about twenty years) rather than the penetrating intuitive perception of Alfred Russel Wallace, that produced so widespread an effect, and induced the scientific world (and eventually popular

opinion) to give so much adherence to the theory of Evolution which both those great men propounded. It is because I am convinced that there is much still to be done before the conclusions of students become accepted as the well-grounded conviction of intelligent people in general, that I consider every book of this kind as a valuable contribution to the establishment of truth.

The author has, to my knowledge, certain qualifications which add to the value of anything he may publish on this subject. I have known him for many years. He is a man of keen intellect, highly educated, well-balanced, and cautious. In his earlier life he was considerably influenced by the critical and scientific spirit, which challenges all claims on belief and demands stringent evidence before acceptance. This influence is still strongly with him; at the same time, he has no inherent prejudice against belief in the spiritual significance of the Universe, neither is he indifferent to the issue of research in this regard. There are some who imagine that such indifference constitutes a special qualification for discovering truth. Professor William James was of an opposite opinion. He believed (and I entirely agree with him) that the earnestness of the seeker is a very potent factor in the results of search for reality, and you do not find that cold indifference as to the issue is compatible with this kind of earnestness.

The student who fully appreciates the value of the truth of Survival will be likely to examine the evidence for this, and to weigh alternative explanations of facts all the more scrupulously, because he knows that only by thoroughly facing these alternatives and sifting the pros and cons can he reach the solid ground which he wishes to secure for beliefs which radically affect human life and destiny.

Capt. — has both by correspondence and in person discussed this subject with me. He has

related experiences which he has had in past years, and I have noted that these experiences have left him uncertain and perplexed. As recently as November 1918 he wrote to me that he could not feel satisfied that the Spiritist Theory is the real explanation of the phenomena. He desired some test which would absolutely exclude mind-reading on the part of the medium, and he did not consider that so far he had obtained this.

His opportunities for carrying on investigation were until lately very limited. Until the war broke out, his work lay in a distant colony. In 1915 he was already over the military age of that period, but he came (at his own expense) to take his part in the great struggle. His readers will be glad to know that he was more than once mentioned in despatches and was awarded the Military Cross in respect of a certain engagement. Active Service left him no time or opportunity, of course, in which to pursue his inquiries, but his interest in the subject which bears so closely on the problems of Life and Death was quickened, and during the latter part of the war we corresponded more frequently on this and kindred themes.

On his return from active service in the East, Capt. — devoted some time to trying by further experiences to reach a more definite conclusion on the subject, either of one sort or another, with the results detailed in this volume.

If I may venture to give my own opinion on these experiences, I would say that they seem to me to be characterized by a purposefulness which should of itself arrest attention, and raise a question—Where did this purpose arise? In the book test there is no possibility that Capt. —'s mind was the directing agent. Who, then, was it, who so carefully planned this test?

I leave the question with the reader, merely urging fair-minded enquirers to give full weight to this appearance of purpose and directive intelligence which is so frequently obvious in psychic experiences, and not to allow the significance of this factor to escape them when endeavouring to estimate the relative values of various theories by which they seek to interpret these and similar experiences.

H. A. DALLAS.

FOREWORD

'The glory of sacrifice realized in service: Love, the world's new dynamic: comradeship in a great adventure: these are the things which transfigure human effort; by these things will the message be realized for which the whole world travaileth. Shall our needs claim them as the heritage of the Christian fellowship, and for ourselves as members of it? So far as the Church has failed, and it is very easy to overestimate its failure, it has been through a mistaken conception of its character and function. We have resigned ourselves too readily to the thought of a society organised more and more in separation from the body politic which we call the State. If we have sought at all to compel men to come in, it has been by the sanctions of the law. Let us substitute the attraction of Love. Outside its pale have grown up a multitude of new ideas, countless new activities. Let us dare to offer them a welcome, instead of fearing the disruptive force of the ideas, distrusting the restless energies behind the activities. We have spoken

much of the limitations of the human intellect: we have alternately banned and patronised the seekers after Truth. Let us remember at the same time that a true theology must be capable of embracing every new aspect of divine knowledge; that every new discovery of science is a new revelation of the glory of God; that every honest investigation, however disturbing its refusal to bow to accepted standards, is a new act of homage to Him who is the Truth. True science is always humble, but it is never craven: to belaud it and at the same time fix the limits of its enquiry is to insult science, worse, it is to dishonour God. Shall we who accept *ex animo* the Catholic Creed, never dare to act as if we believed that in Christ are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden? We have spoken to the world of the mystery and pain, and of the duty of resignation to inscrutable decrees. It will believe when it sees us refusing to treat avoidable suffering as any part of a divine plan or to be guilty of the impiety of casting upon God the responsibility for all our blunders and our sins—our sloth, our toleration of the death of children who need not have died but for bad housing, bad food, and sweating before the war. For us there is revealed in the cradle of Bethlehem the utter simplicity of the Love of God, in the home at

Nazareth the picture of the perfect family life. For us is seen upon the Cross of Calvary the transmutation of all human pain as well as of all human values. Now, as never before in this generation, the world is ready to learn the lesson of these things. Now, as never before, it is given to His disciples, to you, and to me, by humility and service, by prayer and work, to seek to apply to the problems of our day the mind of Christ, to carry, by our life and example, by our love and fellowship, a message of good tidings to the suffering world which He came to save. If you have found what the world is seeking, dare all for Love, and make it known.'

The above were the concluding words of a sermon preached in St. Paul's Cathedral on July 13th, 1919, by the Rev. Professor Claude Jenkins.

To the author of this book, they applied with a singular aptness. I had just been urged very strongly to make publicly known the facts recorded in Part 2 of this book, but the idea of so doing was very far from being a welcome one. Apart from a natural disinclination to court that kind of publicity, there were reasons—there are reasons—for aversion from it. I shrank, and shrink, from the use of names and circumstances alluded to in the communications which, though

not exactly confidential, are nevertheless deeply personal to me and to others who are living and moving amongst us. There are other reasons—professional reasons of expediency—why such publicity seemed undesirable, and I ask my readers to accept my assurance that these reasons are not entirely personal and therefore not entirely selfish. Still I could not but feel that it was a grave question whether I was morally justified in withholding these facts from all but the very few private friends to whom I had contemplated confining them. At this hour of doubt I heard the stirring words above quoted, and had almost decided to “dare all and make it known.” My friend Miss Dallas was one who had most strongly urged publication, and to her I explained my difficulties, including the serious one that I should feel obliged to excise some substantial parts of the records if I did so. Miss Dallas attached even greater weight to the objections I had put forward than I had done myself. But she offered a new suggestion. This was that I should publish, but publish under a *nom-de-plume*, and at the same time she most kindly spontaneously offered to mitigate the chief disadvantages of complete anonymity by writing an introduction to the book, as a guarantee of my *bona fides* and of m

competence to express opinions upon such important matters.

Miss Dallas is so well-known a writer upon these subjects herself, and also so well accredited as a student, of sane and balanced mind, of them, that I gladly accepted her offer; for though it is difficult to imagine what motive I could have for desiring to deceive or mislead any one in a matter like this, or for putting forward evidence of this kind with any object but a single-minded desire to add to public knowledge and to the public conception of Truth, yet complete anonymity; unexplained and unsupported, does somehow tend to discount the value of testimony. This difficulty, Miss Dallas has, I think, effectually removed. Even now, my own is the only name actually suppressed, except in a few cases in the communications themselves, and I am quite aware that my identity may not be entirely concealed from a certain not large number of people, but that risk I have decided to take, rather than omit or change the names of essential witnesses to important facts who have very kindly allowed me to use them.

It may be asked whether it is fair that I should have used these names while suppressing my own, which differs, by the way, from any of them. The answer is, first, that I have permission to use them, and secondly that the mere corroboration of

certain facts does not identify these persons with the investigations that produced the facts nor with any conclusions that may be drawn from them.

While, therefore, I have not "dared" quite "all," I have gone as far as I felt justified in doing in the spirit of those words.

Now the mental processes of an author writing purely theoretically on a subject like this, would not usually be of any particular importance or interest to the reader. But in the present case, I am at one and the same time a witness recording certain facts and a judge summing up their value and the interpretation which it appears to him should be placed upon them. The jury is the public. Therefore I think it is necessary to give briefly the history of my association with spiritualistic phenomena, and my mental attitude towards them at various times in the past.

I first began to hear about what is called Spiritualism about 1898 or 1899. In those days, I was young and dogmatic, and on, I admit, really no evidence at all, I condemned the whole thing as pure humbug and self-delusion, fraud and deception, and of a very unwholesome nature at that, and I felt a fine contempt for the foolish people who allowed themselves to be so stupidly gulled.

In about 1904-5, I first began to pay serious attention to these stories of phenomena and



messages, and to admit the possibility that my previous hasty conclusions might not be infallible, and that at any rate it was worth while to see for myself what grounds apparently sensible people had for attaching credence to them. About the end of 1905, I first became acquainted with apparent phenomena at first hand, and in September 1907 I had my first sitting with a good medium. This sitting was anonymous,* and very striking in its results, and I was astounded. I had never expected that any really important tests would occur in my case, and had supposed that I should easily see through any attempt to produce them. Fraud was in this case impossible, and I did not know enough of the Telepathy theory to attach the weight to it which I ought to have done, and have since done.

This brought me therefore to the second usual and typical frame of mind of the man-in-the-street who first investigates. I was inclined at first to jump to too ready acceptance—to go to the other extreme. That frame of mind did not last long. I had already been put in the way of reading scientific literature on the subject, and I soon found that my second attitude was as rash as my first had been.

*Throughout, I use this—the usual—term to denote a sitting in which my name has been withheld from the medium.

My interest was by now thoroughly aroused, and I began something more like serious study of the subject. Partly by means of libraries, and partly by loan and private purchase, I read most of the important books on the subject, those by convinced Spiritualists as well as those by cautious investigators, and also a large number of books upon Psychology, Biology, Theosophy, and all the various subjects which it appeared might bear upon the problem, as well as the transactions of the Society for Psychical Research in respect of the mediumship of Mrs. Piper, and two or three books written upon that group of phenomena alone. This reading extended over a number of years, and was accompanied by sittings, as opportunity offered from time to time, with mediums of good reputation, and a great deal of discussion and correspondence with other people.

The effect of all this was, as time went on, to make me colder and colder more and more cautious, doubtful, and analytical. I had long recognized that the Fraud theory was untenable, and of comparatively little importance except in a few isolated cases; I had easily seen through the only clearly dishonest medium I ever met, and even she, I incline to think from what I heard, was only so because she was fitful in her powers, and drew upon her very transparent histrionic resources

when her muse was silent. Eventually, I reached the conclusion that there was scarcely anything which had occurred to me that could not just possibly be explained by Telepathy, and it also seemed equally possible thereby to explain almost all of the evidence which I had read except a good deal which was insufficiently vouched for.

All this time I was living in a distant colony where good mediums from England paid rare visits, and where, also, too many people are apt to know too much about one another, and thus I had again to introduce the possibility of fraud here or there and the always uncomfortable idea of its being a factor, even if an unlikely one.

I felt myself up against a brick wall, and decided to suspend judgment entirely until I should have more favourable conditions for investigation. The result of this cessation of investigation was that doubt seemed to grow and increase for no very particular reason.

Then came the war, the end of which found me demobilized and for some months living alone in London, my presence there known to but a few friends. This seemed to present an admirable opportunity for a renewal of investigation. Fifteen years of unbroken absence from London, and, with the exception of a short time in 1917, from England, including four years absence from my

country of residence, in theatres of war far distant from both, would have been a pretty effective covering of my tracks, even in the case of mediums who should know my name.

But warned by previous experiences, I was determined to guard by every possible means—not merely or so much against Fraud itself, as against the possibility of its being suggested by even the most suspicious, but more particularly for my own satisfaction and for that of a few private friends; for no thought of publishing what should occur, or indeed any but slender hopes of anything really important occurring, crossed my mind at that time. The great kindness of Sir Oliver Lodge and his Secretary, Miss Walker, enabled me to obtain anonymous interviews with three mediums in all.

Along with much that was very suggestive, I obtained from Mrs. Leonard the exceedingly important Book-test to which I have given a separate chapter to itself in Part 2, besides two or three other tests which are in themselves of high importance. From the others, and from Mr. Vango, I also had several striking occurrences. Of this Book Test and of some other ~~and~~ the Leonard Sitting, the reader must judge himself; I will not anticipate them here.

I have given this brief account of my connection with Psychic Investigation, because I wish to show that I have not only given real study and care to the whole question of supernormal psychology, but that I originally approached it from a hostile and sceptical point of view; indeed I preserved a non-committal attitude longer, I think, than is usual. For I have had much striking evidence that I have not even recorded, because I should have had to rely on my memory in so doing.

I never hoped or expected such tests as Mrs. Leonard has given, and there are others which I have had to suppress for personal reasons, and because they can only mature after this volume has gone to press; that is unavoidable.

There is one other personal matter to which I think it is advisable to refer, because when a writer expresses opinions upon such questions as are dealt with in this book, his experience in judging evidence is an important, if not an essential factor to the reader. Active Service in the army would not at first sight seem to have any connection with the judgment of Psychic Phenomena. But there is one side of that life for which I am grateful to it even from this point of view. Through certain circumstances, I had a rather unusual amount of experience on Court-

martials, both as prosecutor* and more particularly as a member of various courts. The valuable training which this has given me as to the nature and importance of various kinds of evidence has been of the greatest service to me. If a just and humane man is called upon, day after day to decide whether certain of his fellow men have been guilty of crimes against the law, and to pronounce upon them a sentence which may vary from three months imprisonment to the forfeiture of their lives, he must recognise that though human judgment is fallible, he is bound so to discipline his mind as to reduce this fallibility to a minimum: he must do this for the sake of humanity and justice, knowing that he must himself one day face in some form or other the tribunal of Eternal Justice, and stand or fall, not by his decision, but by the honesty of his decision. No one can realize, who has not been in that position, the relief in a court when the evidence enables it to pronounce that they "find the accused not guilty of the charge and honourably acquit him of the same." One of my happiest remembrances is of the day when, as a member of

*The prosecutor in a Court-Martial is different from that in a civil court, he is bound to see that all relevant evidence is produced and that the accused has fair play.

a certain court, I personally was the direct means whereby crucial evidence was elicited which would otherwise have failed to be produced resulting in the acquittal of a brave man charged with a serious military offence for which the evidence already before the court seemed on the face of it unassailable. If these remarks should show the reader that I have at least some claim more than the average man to discrimination, he will, I hope, not think them wholly irrelevant. On all these matters I have been purposely frank so that I may seem less of a "stranger" to those who meet with this book.

The main portion of the volume is divided into two parts. I have in writing it had in mind chiefly the "man-in-the-street" of the intelligent kind, with open mind. I have chiefly addressed those who would wish for something to go upon in judging facts, however superficially convincing, by the light of all reasonable theories which have been put forward in regard to such facts. There are many people who would not advance the Telepathy Theory, for instance, unless they knew a good deal about it, but who would shrink from the task of consulting numerous bulky volumes in a long and fatiguing course of reading for which they might have neither time nor inclination. There are others who know very little about

Mediumistic Phenomena from the Spiritualist point of view, and who are not disposed to seek this information at first hand without knowing something more about this too. Such persons therefore often ignore the whole subject, not because they are not interested, or because they are unreasonably prejudiced, but because they see no means of forming any conclusion except that it is a big and puzzling subject. So it is, of course, but neither so big nor so puzzling, I think, that only scientists are able to take any practical interest in it: my object has been at least to convince this type of enquirer that it is capable of investigation by him and worth investigation by him. I had thus to choose between giving such persons certain facts, and leaving them without any material to judge such facts, or attempting a brief but careful exposition of the essentials of the alternative theories as they are now formulated. I chose the latter course, and I hope that the intelligent enquirer will find in Part 1 real assistance in judging the facts in Part 2.

On the other hand, he who wishes to test my presentation of these theories, or to examine the evidence upon which the theories themselves have been based, and the views of other writers, can still study previous works especially dealing with them, and I venture to hope that such study will

be in no small degree facilitated by these short chapters in Part 1. To an intelligent man, the whole subject of Supernormal Psychology is most fascinating and interesting, apart from its bearing upon the question of Survival, and if the resumé which I have given of certain branches of it should induce him to make a more serious study of it, I think his labours will be amply repaid.

But I have also had in view the reader who is already an experienced student of Psychic Phenomena, and who is always anxious to consider new views or interpretations of them. I cannot hope to have added in Part 1 any new facts to our knowledge of supernormal psychology, nor have I attempted to do so. But I think I may have placed some of the old facts in lights differing to some extent from those in which previous books have considered them. I am therefore not without hope that the student also will read Part 1 not wholly without profit, even if it be only through a suggestive hint or point of view here or there.

I have endeavoured to be as clear and simple as possible in dealing with the subjects discussed, and for the reader to whom they are new, have provided a short but complete glossary of terms used, which, though they sometimes have a formidable sound, are really quite simple in their meanings and easily understood by persons of ordinary intelli-

gence and education ; it is impossible for the sake of clearness and brevity to avoid their use. In Appendix C, page 285, the evidence recorded has been carefully tabulated.

On the other hand, no person need read Part 1 unless he likes, though I warn him that unless he has already studied the subjects with which they deal, he is liable, by confining himself to Part 2 alone, to form unwarrantable conclusions : these are much more likely to be in the nature of too hasty or too complete acceptance of the Spirit Theory than of too ready rejection of it.

I should also remark that by the time this book is in the hands of the public, I shall be many thousand miles away from Great Britain, and that therefore answers to challenges in the public press to explain this, that, or the other, will be virtually impossible. Also, I shall be too busy to be able, as a rule, to answer voluminous correspondence in regard to the matter in the book. Finally, I would ask my readers to remember that Miss Dallas is not the writer, and has no responsibility for the subject matter, with some of which she may even disagree, and that it is therefore useless to address criticisms or enquiries about it to her ; further that the persons whose names appear as witnesses merely bear testimony to the facts in the statements which they have signed, and will be unable

to add anything to what they have already said in those statements.

The importance of tests is so great that I wonder that more is not done in the way of arranging them before death. In Appendix B, I give a few tests which can without difficulty be arranged by living persons for communication after their death to their survivors if possible, together with the precautions that it is well to take.

For any shortcomings in the discussions, I can only pray the indulgence of the reader; I do not ask him to agree with me in any of my conclusions—that is a matter for himself; but I hope that he will give me credit for having no desire whatever but to add to public knowledge. In so far as I may have been able to do so, that is in itself sufficient reward. In so far as any individual may disagree with me, I can only plead that I have done my best with a most abstruse, little-understood, and puzzling subject, and remind him that,

“Not failure but low aim is crime.”

THE SPIRIT THEORY

There is so much ignorance on the part of many people as to what really is believed and claimed by Mediums and by the mass of Spiritualists, including the many educated and thoughtful adherents to that form of Belief, that it seems well to attempt a short explanation of what certain, at least, of these phenomena really purport to be, and of what mediums and Spiritualists, so far as they pretend to understand and agree about them, believe to be the means by which they are produced.

Of these things, I can only give the general idea that I have assimilated by conversation with a good many people and the reading of the principal books upon the subject. I shall try, however, to confine myself to those doctrines or beliefs upon which there is general agreement, without, of course, by any means necessarily associating myself with them.

Moreover, as these phenomena have to be examined by the light of the Telepathy Theory, it is

well to have clearly in mind what is presented to us for comparison with that theory.

To begin with, of course all these supernormal mediumistic phenomena are attributed to the agency of discarnate spirits, and to that agency alone.

Those who have died are believed to pass, not into a distant locality, from an astronomical point of view, but into a different state of existence—some call it a fourth-dimensional existence, but that is rather an imaginative explanation than one for which they claim to have any particular evidence. The individual continues to exist unchanged, with his memory, his habits of thought, his affections, his interests, his character whatever it be,—in a word his individuality, and in fact has lost nothing whatever but his physical body and his power of making himself known to others by physical means. Most Spiritualists believe, I think, that he still has a psychic counterpart of his physical body, semi-material, or consisting of an attenuated form of matter, which is still a real habitation of the Spirit, and is perceptible by other spirits,* though

*At any rate to those in the same "plane." The whole conception is now largely impregnated with the beliefs of Theosophy, or at least akin to them. Theosophy borrowed much of them from Esoteric Buddhism. To what extent Theosophy originally borrowed from Spiritualism and Spiritualism now borrows from Theosophy I do not pretend to say.

normally imperceptible by such living persons as have not "clairvoyant" power. This body is not supposed to require nourishment, because there is no waste and repair of organic tissue. The individual, as indeed seems natural and probable enough, has undergone no marked intellectual or spiritual change by his change in state; he has neither been transformed into angel nor into devil; far from having become omniscient, he is bewildered and puzzled at first by his new condition, which he is sometimes said not for a time even to realize, and he finds that he has to adjust himself to an entirely new set of conditions. He begins his new existence just where he left off in the old, and the pleasantness and happiness of the new life are in exact proportion to the nobility and unselfishness of the old. Normally, those of his old interests which concerned purely mundane things after a time are believed to die out, the time varying according to the degree of his previous absorption in them, and to be gradually replaced by new ones, adapted to and consequent upon his new surroundings. Equally naturally, he has the same, or rather an enhanced, interest in those to whom he was bound by close ties and who remain behind. A previous life of sin, it is insisted, is punished by no set tribunal, and in no arbitrary way, but is the natural and logical consequence of

it, and the punishment is the exact state or "plane" of spiritual existence into which, by an automatic system of natural law, his spiritual condition has caused him to gravitate. The Judge is his newly awakened conscience, and the penalty his growing remorse and the difficulty of undoing or atoning for the wrong, and thus improving his state.

He is, they hold, to a considerable extent aware of what is happening to those whom he has left behind. As to *what* extent, Spiritualists do not seem to have any very precise or uniform doctrine, and doubtless a great deal of nonsense is talked about it, but they seem to be generally agreed that the discarnate sense the general nature of the thoughts, and especially the "spiritual condition," of their earthly friends. Most of them believe, I think, that the higher the spiritual plane and the moral tone of these thoughts of the incarnate, the more exactly the spiritually-minded discarnate can sense them, and that gross, carnal, selfish, cruel, and generally undesirable conditions of mind, according to their strength and their degree of grossness, create a more or less impenetrable psychic barrier around the living, and shut them off from all but such spirits among the dead as are in sympathy with that kind of thought. It is believed that thoughts affectionate or otherwise of

disincarnate spirits themselves are sensed by them in an especial degree.

I think I have given a fair resumé of the general conception of the life after death, but there is no doubt that the whole of the Spiritualistic beliefs on this subject are coloured by Theosophy, the writings of Swedenborg, the scripts of Stainton Moses, and the ideas of mediums themselves, and it is needless to pursue it further. There seems not a little in it that sounds quite reasonable and natural.

What is more important, however, to the matter in hand, is the belief that a certain number of living people have developed in a special degree some one or more of the various powers of what is called mediumship. I say "developed," because the idea is that every one has some of these powers more or less latent, and can, by encouraging, desiring, and practising them, develop them to a greater or less extent. But certain persons are supposed to have them no matter how obtained—in a marked and unusual degree, and are called "mediums"—meaning, of course, mediums of communication between the Dead and the Living. A medium, or "sensitive," from his own and the Spiritualist's point of view, is a person who is able, in one or other or in more than one way, to obtain messages from spirits. Or he is able to produce

supernormal phenomena by their aid. Or he can describe their appearance. Or by his agency they can "build themselves up"—this is a rare and coveted form of mediumship—into materialized forms of the departed, visible to and recognisable by ordinary persons. Or, finally, he can enable them to invade his own physical organism and to use his hand or his organs of speech, as you or I might enter some one else's motor car and drive it.

The primary object of this purported communication is to convince those who have been left behind mourning the departed that the latter are still existing and in close touch and sympathy with them—to convince the many who are in doubt whether there is a life after death that there really is such a life.

The secondary object is to give living people an idea what this state of existence is like, and to impress upon them the importance of leading a noble, pure, restrained, and unselfish life by explaining to them what the consequences of misuse of this life will be, and also to prepare them for the change by familiarizing them with its conditions.

The "man-in-the-street" has usually a rather mistaken idea about all this: he thinks that spiritual phenomena always consist of purposeless noises and movements of furniture, which he

believes to be conjuring tricks, or of so-called messages which he believes to be mainly vulgar, trivial or silly. If he investigates the subject long enough, he will find that he is labouring under a complete delusion on this point: such things occur, but they are on the whole uncommon. I have had to do with many mediums, and with two exceptions---and these, by the way, were private unpaid mediums*---I have never had any communications or occurrences which were not either of more or less evidential importance or, if of a general nature, of a high tone.

However, that is not a side of the matter upon which I wish to enlarge: the purpose of this book is to examine the question whether certain of these phenomena can or can not be attributed to a disincarnate source---whether, in the sense of being due to the intervention of disembodied spirits, they take place at all.

The chief phenomena of mediumship separate themselves into three classes---

(a) Those phenomena apparently connected with matter, which would seem, if established, to indicate wholly new properties and a new set of laws beyond the boundaries of ordinary **Physics**. They are commonly called "**Physical Phenomena**."

*Neither of them the lady described in Part 2.

This is a very unsuitable term. Apart from the fact that the word "physical" is used in its commonest sense as concerning the human body, while these phenomena claim to originate in the agency of spirits, they are on the other hand not physical in the other sense, as, if they are abnormal phenomena at all, they are quite outside the domain of present-day Physics. Such are*—

Movements of furniture,

Sounds of music, bells etc.,

Direct Voice,

Apports,

Writing on sealed slates, etc.

Spirit Photography,

Messages by means of a tilting table, 'Planchette' and raps,

Materializations.

(b) Phenomena which depend on some peculiar abnormal function of the medium's own mind.

These are—

Psychometry,

Clairaudience,

Clairvoyance.

(c) Phenomena in which the medium is the physical instrument by means of which an invading

*For the explanation of any terms not understood, see Glossary.

discarnate agency expresses himself in a speech or writing. These are—

Automatic Writing,

Trance Control.

Spiritualists often speak of “Inspirational” speaking or writing, meaning a form of semi-mediumship in which the general sense is impressed upon the speaker or writer, who is in a fully waking state and expresses the ideas conveyed to him in his own words. Of course, with the exception of the use of the word “medium,” the idea is shared with them in various forms by people who are not Spiritualists. But it is such a debatable matter, lacking any exact or satisfactory evidence, even from the Spiritualistic point of view, that I have not included it. If I did, it would require a class by itself between *(b)* and *(c)*. All I can say is that on more occasion I have heard platform addresses given by mediums who were said to be, and who claimed to be, acting as “inspirational” mediums, and the painful outpouring of a mass of meaningless platitudes, mixed with a queer jargon of the various beliefs which I have already mentioned, which was offered for the instruction of the audience, was ten times as feeble as the poorest sermon I ever heard, and suggested that the sooner the control found some occupation for which he was more fitted the better for him, as

well as for the unfortunate people who were induced to listen to him, and for the reputation of spiritualism. I may have been unlucky in those particular cases : I sincerely hope so.

The discussion of these phenomena suggests very strongly that both a new classification and a new nomenclature are now needed. In the earlier days of Psychic Research, scientific investigators have made careful classifications, but these were of abnormal phenomena as a whole, and they were made from the very cautious and non-committal standpoint of the *primâ facie* nature of a number of facts and occurrences to account for which the theories had yet to be formulated. This was entirely sound, and has been of the greatest service. Even the facts had to be tested for proof that they were facts, and as they were tested and proved, they were cautiously classified and named, rather from the point of view of their observed appearance than from that of their cause. The classification then served as a sort of syllabus of investigation for further enquiry into their causes.

But the focus of enquiry, the centre of attention, has now shifted considerably. The great majority—indeed almost all—of the original investigators, who were men distinguished for their scientific or other attainments, have rightly or wrongly accepted the agency of discarnate spirits as the

only feasible explanation of a certain number of supernormal phenomena, and view it sympathetically as a provisional working hypothesis in the case of a large number of others, pending further evidence. There is therefore a certain amount of common ground between them and the Spiritualists, and it seems desirable that mediumistic phenomena should now be classified tentatively as such, and that regard should be had to what is now believed may be their nature and method of manifestation.

Many of the terms in use among Spiritualists have been adopted by Investigators for the sake of convenience, and many of them are very unsuitable. I have already alluded to the description of certain phenomena as "Physical," and I shall criticise "Psychometry." Another very unhappy term is "Automatic Writing." The Greek word *αὐτοματός*, as translated by Liddell and Scott, is "acting of one's own will," "acting of oneself," "self-moving," "self-acting," all of them phrases which exactly express the one thing which "Automatic Writing" claims not to be. If they are used of the hand itself, they are absurd; if they are used of the person writing they are misleading. Either this phenomenon is attributable to an invading spirit or is it due to the action of the conscious or sub-conscious mind of the writer, but in

neither case can it be called automatic, in the sense in which that word is generally used or in that of its true translation. If the phenomenon is considered to be due to an agency outside the personality of the writer, a suitable term might be "invasional writing;" if to a source within the writer's mind, it might be called "automorphic," which, *αὐτομορφος*—self-produced). A better term than either would be "Involuntary Writing," which, while it avoids coining a new word, covers both possibilities and yet preserves the character of absence of conscious will which alone would make it an abnormal phenomenon.

For the purposes of the present discussion it would only be confusing to adopt new terminology, but in Appendix 'A,' page 276, I have ventured to put forward a classification and nomenclature for mediumistic phenomena which any one interested can peruse.

However, to return to the three groups of phenomena which we have seen above, the first group—that of so-called Physical Phenomena,—I do not propose to discuss, for the reason that I have had no personal experience of any of them, though I have of course read and heard from others many accounts of them which seem to make the explanation by conjuring, etc., almost impossible of acceptance. They form a separate and

very interesting branch of the subject, demanding, it seems to me, considerable further investigation by physicists. The main purpose of this book is to consider the Telepathy Theory, especially in relation to the incidents recorded in Part 2, and Physical Phenomena can have little or nothing to do with Telepathy in any conceivable form.

We come, then, to the second group. 2284

I do not know who invented the term "Psychometry" as a name for the phenomena which it purports to include; it does not seem a very suitable word, as, if translated according to its derivation, it would mean a 'measurement of the soul or spirit,' a rather absurd description of it, as it seems to me. But at any rate it is the name in common use among Spiritualists as referring to a fairly defined group of mediumistic phenomena. The medium who uses this faculty is handed a ring, watch, glove, bunch of keys, pair of eye-glasses, or some object worn in close contact with the person either of the sitter or of some one deceased. Sometimes a letter in an envelope, of course--written by this person is used. The essential feature of these phenomena seems to be that the article should be something which has been handled and touched freely and more or less exclusively by the owner. The handling of such an object by the medium enables him, as he believes,

to describe the various conditions, both external and inner, in the life of its owner. He appears to sense the predominant factors and conditions in the sitter's present and past life.

I once had, unaccompanied by any sort of purported message from a discarnate source, a very extraordinary description of these things in my own case, extending to the most detailed personal descriptions of persons concerned in them, of which the medium could not possibly have known anything by normal means. As in those days I unfortunately had not begun to keep exact records of sittings, I shall not attempt to reproduce this one from memory, besides, there was nothing incompatible with Telepathy in it - on the contrary it rather suggested that explanation. But other kinds of communications are made by the medium who uses this method: the handling of these objects seems to assist him to get into touch with the discarnate, especially if the article belonged to such a person and not to the sitter himself, and to convey messages from them. This really classifies the results obtained by Psychometry into two distinct kinds: those which concern the life of the sitter, and those which concern his discarnate friends.

The explanation given by the medium is not that he derives the information from the object

itself, but that it enables him to get into intimate psychic relation with the owner, whether living or dead, and thus to sense his conditions and thoughts. I think that in past investigations too little attention has been given to the beliefs and statements of mediums themselves. There was a quite natural and proper disposition to centre attention upon the *phenomena*, and to see what explanations they in themselves suggested. But the desirability of confining enquiry to that alone ceases to a considerable degree if we agree that the medium is honest and that the phenomena are genuinely supernatural, whatever their actual explanation; or if the spirit solution is adopted as a working hypothesis. The medium may or may not be right as to his explanation of the 'mechanism' of his phenomena, but he will tell one that he is absolutely convinced of how they appear to him to be produced. Now, if a medical man is trying to diagnose the disease of a patient—even a mental patient—he is most careful to enquire minutely exactly what the sensations of the latter are, and to a large extent he is thereby guided in his diagnosis. The patient alone can tell him exactly what he feels, and with due caution he takes the patient's evidence into account. As the medium is the only person who can describe his psychic impressions, it seems to me that his

testimony should be taken into serious account. Its value is in proportion to his apparent honesty, intelligence, and power of discrimination. A collation of evidence from the best mediums as to the nature of psychic phenomena, as it appears to them, would, I think, be a quite valuable contribution to our knowledge of the subject. Of course, to people who are firmly convinced that all mediums are deliberate charlatans, such an idea is laughable, but then so to them is the whole Spirit Theory. As they have by their superior wisdom been enabled so simply to solve problems which have puzzled the first scientists of the world for years, and which still continue to do so, I am not venturing just now to argue with them, but am addressing the people of inferior intelligence that I have just mentioned, people as foolish as I am, in fact, who must continue to grope in the darkness till the heaven-sent wisdom descends upon them.

Psychometry is a form of mediumship which seems to me to have been rather regrettably neglected by investigators. If it means anything---if it really happens, that is to say, and the results whatever their origin, do happen---it means that an object kept in close physical association with a person who is living, accumulates and retains some trace of that person's individuality.

The object being a purely material thing, without the spirit or soul which most people attribute to a living person, Psychometry certainly suggests that there must be some physical or semi-physical quality about this impregnation of it with psychic influence, as if it were in a kind of way magnetised. This is a most interesting question. The Spiritualist does not trouble about it at all usually: the results are what matter to him, rather than the means. But to the scientist it should present an important field of experiment, because it so strongly suggests a region of psychology that impinges on Physics as quite distinct from Physiology. Is this impregnation in any way akin to electricity or magnetism in its nature? If not, what is it? Or is it entirely imaginary? The results suggest that it is not, but by no means prove so. Has it any relation to 'Physical' phenomena? Would it affect the photographic plate at all? Would another object, fresh from the jeweller's, placed in close contact with it for some time in a box by means of a pair of tongs, become similarly impregnated? If a new ring were placed on the finger of a corpse, removed immediately before burial, sealed up, and given to a medium, would any results occur? If three unrelated persons wore a new ring for a month each at a time for the period of a year, and it were then

sealed up, without being touched, by a fourth person, and given by him to a medium, what would result? All these questions seem worth investigating, and I think little, if anything, has been done in that respect.

Mr. J. J. Vango always asks for some such object as this, and though he prefers one belonging to a deceased person, it does not seem greatly to affect the results whether that condition is satisfied. Anyway, Mr. Vango has other forms of mediumship than purely psychometric powers, and his psychometric* results are rather of the second than the first kind (see above). It may, of course, be that he has a purely subjective belief that the objects assist him, and that in reality what assistance he gets from them is not supernatural, but consists in their giving him confidence, like a soldier's mascot, or, as is believed, the rod or switch of the water-diviner. This may be the explanation of all Psychometry. It is difficult altogether to differentiate between Psychometry and Clairvoyance. It is interesting to notice that at the Vango Seance (see Part 2) I gave Mr. Vango a ring which I had worn for many years and which came to me from my father. Yet the only descrip-

*I do not know, however, whether Mr. Vango calls himself a Psychometrist.

tion which was given me was of a person who had no connection whatever with the latter.

Clairaudience purports to be the hearing of words as it were inwardly. Ordinary speech is conveyed by sound, which is the effect upon the eardrum and other organs of the ear of *atmospheric* vibrations transmitted by them by means of the aural nerves to the brain. In a hall from which all air had been exhausted, sound would be impossible. Clairaudience appears to have nothing to do with sound in the ordinary sense, or with the atmosphere. It is conceivable, but most improbable, that it should be caused by sounds too faint for the normal ear to distinguish, but the idea has too many difficulties to be in the least likely, and mediums are convinced that it is not by physical hearing that they are clairaudient, and that it is a psychic process of a kind that I have ventured to call *intus-functive*. (See Appendix A.)

The sounds seem to be heard objectively but yet inwardly. If Telepathy from the discarnate be the explanation, it is quite probable that clairaudience may be a subjective hallucination produced by a telepathic impression conveyed to the mind of the medium by the communicator.

Clairvoyance, one of the commonest forms of mediumship, is similar to Clairaudience. The

medium seems to see with inward vision scenes and persons and symbols which he has never seen objectively, though they appear to him to be objective, and to be often able to describe them with great accuracy, just as if they were objects clearly visible to him in the ordinary way. I think some mediums believe that they really physically see with their eyes things invisible to others. Objective vision is perhaps less difficult to believe in respect of Clairvoyance than objective hearing in the case of Clairaudience. Light is the effect of *etheric* (not atmospheric) vibrations upon the eye and the nerve-endings of the optic nerves, conveyed to the brain. Moreover, there have been cases where several persons together without, so far as is known, special mediumistic powers, have seen, as if objectively, phantasms of the Dead or the Living.* Such occurrences may provide an analogy if not a parallel. But even in such cases also, a collective subjective hallucination due to Telepathy may be the true explanation, and a similar one may explain Clairvoyance, though it is then more difficult to reconcile it with the facts. It is not my purpose, however, to attempt to argue the obscure question whether these phenomena of Clairvoyance and Clairaudience are as such

*See the works of Myers and Gurney on the subject.

subjective, as this does not affect the main issue, and is better studied by reference to the voluminous works already available.

We now come to Group (c).

'Automatic Writing,' as already observed, is rather a misnomer as applied to the phenomenon. It is used to describe the case of a medium who writes messages, but instead of his writing in the normal way, the movements of the hand are more or less completely involuntary.

The nature, and, I think, the importance of this phenomenon are not the same in all cases: it is by no means uniform in the manner of its manifestations. In the case of some mediums, it occurs only when they are in a state of trance. The medium is then apparently unconscious of his ordinary surroundings—indeed he often writes fluently and neatly with his eyes fast closed. Whether or not his writing is in this case the result of his Sub-conscious Mind, acting as a kind of Secondary Personality, or whether it is the result of an invasion or possession of his physical body by a discarnate intelligence, can only be suggested by the nature of the communications. They can only with any confidence be attributed to the latter cause if by their nature they eliminate any reasonably conceivable form of the Telepathy Theory or normal information of the medium's own. The

writing is frequently neat and characteristic, but of a totally different character from that of the medium in his normal state, and often very rapid; it usually takes the form of a running script with the words in each line joined together. In the case of beginners—what spiritualists call only partly-developed mediums—it is often a sprawling untidy hand like that of a young child, interspersed with occasional excursions into quite formless and meaningless scribbles.

With some mediums, however, the writing occurs in a partially or wholly conscious state, when, according to them, their hand is manipulated independent of their own will as if by an invading force which has taken possession of the motor centres governing the muscles of the arm and hand. Mrs. Piper* produced on occasion, if I remember rightly, the probably unique phenomenon of when in trance at one and the same time on the one hand conducting a verbal conversation with one person, and on the other hand giving written messages to another person and answering in writing his questions.†

I have myself had but little first-hand acquaint-

*The medium so long and so carefully watched by the Society for Psychical Research under the strictest test conditions. See the Transactions of the Society at the time.

†See Proceedings of the Society, part xxxiii, p. 291.

tance with what I shall henceforth call **Involuntary Writing**, having only had actual script from one medium who used this means. This medium was a cultivated and educated lady, who accepted no payment, refined and thoughtful, with a deep scientific interest in the whole subject, and a quite open mind as to the true interpretation of the phenomena. She was in a conscious state when writing. The messages were not in my case such as to combat the **Telepathy Theory**. I noticed, however, one very curious and interesting thing, which is worth recording for its scientific interest. I was sitting a couple of yards from the medium during the writing; she sat with her back almost turned towards me in a dark corner. I was to her 'left rear,' as one says in the army, and her left hand and arm were raised so as completely to shade her eyes from the light of the window behind me. Her position made it impossible for her to see in which direction my eyes were turned. But her right hand was thrust well forward and I was able to see it when she was writing, by moving my eyes, without moving my head, towards it. I was anxious to observe the nature of the movements of her hand, so that I might have some definite impression of the degree of absence of volition in its movement. But I found that when I cautiously turned my eyes alone, *not*

my head, and observed her hand, it at once began to display agitated, jerky, and irregular movements, and to make nothing but long formless scribbles about the paper, they of course appearing in the script when it was afterwards handed to me. As soon as I looked away, I could hear it as it were settling down again to the slow and laborious, but ordered and harmonious movements of slow writing in a large hand. (The writing was very large and childish, and quite unlike the neat and educated hand in which I have received letters from this lady.) I did not at once connect this behaviour of her hand with myself, but when I began to notice this connection, I tried again two or three times with the same result. I have no explanation to put forward in regard to it, but of the facts I am quite convinced: there was no possible doubt about them. The medium was quite surprised, and as puzzled as I was, when I afterwards told her what had happened, as she had not connected the scribbles with my looking at her hand, of which she was not aware at the time.*

The general impression which I have formed

*Of course I decline to believe that the actual act of looking caused this, as if my eye had magnetic power; it may however have been due in some way to the focussing of my thought.

about Involuntary Writing, from what I have read and heard of it, is that it is a form of mediumship which lends itself especially easily to self-deception, especially if not done in deep trance, and that it needs to be very cautiously regarded unless the messages are convincing tests.

Trance Control. This seems to be the best form of mediumship on the whole, from all points of view. It is usually with good trance mediums that tests of identity, etc., are given, or at any rate most satisfactorily given. It is also more easy for 'the investigator to form some kind of judgment of the reality and value of the phenomena, and it is usually more difficult to reconcile them with Telepathy.' It is well to understand as clearly as possible in what trance-mediumship claims to consist. According to the Spiritualist's and the medium's* point of view, the nature of trance-mediumship consists, as they understand and believe, in the temporary surrender and evacuation of the physical organism by the psychic personality—'spirit,' they would say—of the medium himself, and the temporary occupation of his body by an invading intelligence which

*It can be taken as a general rule that all mediums, at any rate paid ones, are spiritualists.

uses it for the purpose of speech or movement for the time being in place of the real owner.

They believe that the spirit of the medium meanwhile stands aside, and is in the position of being for the time being virtually itself discarnate, though connected with the body and able to return to it when the temporary occupier has fulfilled his purpose, or at a moment's notice if necessary. Mrs. Piper often behaved, when in process of *regaining* consciousness, like a person who is being forced, unwilling and resisting, into some disagreeable place, and she sometimes uttered distressed protests as if pleading with some one unseen not to oblige her to return.

The spiritualistic view is that the physical organism is primarily a means of physical expression, of manipulating matter, of movement, and of receiving the ordinary sense impressions, and in fact of communicating with other persons also in an incarnate state of existence upon the 'earth-plane' as they call it. But they insist that this is no more the real person than the oyster shell is the oyster, or, a better analogy, than the accumulator is electricity. There is, of course, nothing peculiar about that view, which so far is exactly the same as that held by the most orthodox Christian. The difference of view peculiar to themselves lies in their belief that it is possible for the real self to evacuate

the organism for the time, and for another agency to take possession, though indeed those who accept the account of the casting out of the devil, and its subsequent possession of the Gadarene swine, should have no difficulty in agreeing with them. But then that was a devil, and this is supposed to be our discarnate friends.

The theory is somewhat as if we each lived in a kind of machine like a closed sentry-box, which we could not generally speaking leave, which had openings through which and only through which we could hear the sounds made by motorists' vibrators fixed on other people's boxes, lenses or periscopes by means of which alone we could see material objects and other people's boxes, internal mechanism for moving our box about at will, and openings through which we took in the fuel necessary to generate our motive power. It is also as if by rare and special powers we could on occasion evacuate our box, and allow some one else who had been deprived of his own to step into it and use it. I am neither criticising the theory nor admitting that it represents something that really happens, but simply interpreting it as it is, and endeavouring to explain its nature.

When, therefore, a medium is in a trance, we are not supposed to be talking to him at all. For practical purposes, the medium William Jones has

left the room and another person is using Jones' organs of speech to talk to us, his ears to hear us,* and perhaps his eyes to see us. We are therefore not to be troubled with Jones' ideas, opinions, likes or dislikes, or memories, but solely to be concerned with those of the control—the invader or occupant. But I am by no means satisfied that even in deep trance, the medium's memory really is in total abeyance.

The 'symptoms,' if I may so call them, of trance-control vary. The commonest are that the medium begins to twitch, jerk, utter disconnected words and phrases, and to have some of the appearances of a person who is going to faint or to have some kind of fit or seizure, or perhaps merely to go to sleep. After a moment or two he often next falls back in his chair with his eyes closed, breathing a little heavily, and the whole impression is usually one of slight physical distress. He will now, perhaps, lie quite still for a few moments, as if in a hypnotic sleep. Then, suddenly, and abruptly, his voice, usually more or less changed

*Some things have suggested to me that it is rather a sensing of the thought than a use of the medium's ears that takes place, but it rarely happens without audible speech of the sitter.

in accent and tone, says, 'Good morning! I am pleased to see you,' or makes some such observation. At this stage, the eyes may or may not open; more often they stay closed and remain so throughout the remainder of the sitting. Generally, however, the medium sits up and looks brisk and comfortable again, whether the eyes open or not. When the sitting has lasted an hour or two—seldom as long as two hours, and very rarely longer—the control may say, 'I am getting weak and I shall be tiring the medium; I must go away now.' The medium will then fall back into a somnolent condition. The symptoms in awakening are almost always the same. The medium opens his eyes suddenly with a startled air, glances jerkily from side to side, as if uncertain where he is or why he is there, sometimes mutters and twitches, and puts his hands over his eyes as if unable to bear the light: symptoms of slight physical discomfort are frequent. After a few minutes, he is himself again, though with a slightly dreamy and somewhat exhausted appearance.

The manner of speech is various with different mediums. With Mr. Vango, there is usually but little change from his ordinary tones, but his eyes remain closed in deep trance, a condition he does not always go into. With many, there are strongly marked characteristics of tone and diction, quite

unlike the medium in a normal state, including, not infrequently, a foreign accent.

People who are sceptical about mediumship usually, at first at least, conclude that these mannerisms of speech are merely acting, and cheap acting at that. It is not unnatural that they should. Such may be, in some cases, the explanation, certainly, but the most careful observation from that point of view long ago convinced me that it is not usually so, and that whatever the condition may be, it is at least genuinely abnormal and not acted. Those who have seen cause to give serious study to these phenomena have not done so merely because the medium twitches and looks uncomfortable and then begins to talk with a different accent with his eyes closed. Besides, the main point is *what* is said, not *how* it is said.

As a rule the medium purports to be controlled by some one or two particular individuals whom he calls, and who describe themselves as, his 'guides.' This belief in guides is one of the most deeply rooted and universal beliefs among spiritualists. The theory is that every living person has in close touch with him a certain group of discarnate spirits who are commonly, but not always, relations or close friends who have died, often long ago. These spirits they call 'guides,' and the guides are supposed to watch over certain

more or less defined aspects of the life of the person whom they are guiding—one over business matters, one over physical and health matters, one over spiritual and religious matters, and so on. They are supposed to exercise, apparently in a telepathic way, a greater or less influence upon the conduct and opinions of the person in whom they are interested, according to the degree of suggestibility of this person and his willingness to allow himself to be influenced if he knows anything about it. To these influences Spiritualists trace many of the arbitrary impulses with which we are from time to time seized.

As a rule, it is one of these guides of his that is supposed to control the medium when in a trance, and to act as transmitter or interpreter of the messages from discarnate friends of the sitter himself. It is rare for these latter to control direct. The reasons given are two: first, that the inexperienced communicator can not operate the medium at all, because it needs long practice; second, that either the medium or his guide or both object, for some obscure psychic reason. Nevertheless, the guide of a trance-medium with whom I once had a sitting many years ago, allowed,* on my request,

*If in various parts of this book, I speak of controls as if their identity as such were established and admitted, I only do so for convenience and brevity; I am not *thereby* admitting them to be spirits.

a friend of my own to control. The result was interesting. There were movements of the medium's lips, expressions on her face of vexation and effort, and all the appearance of great desire to speak without the power to do so—something as a case of partial paralysis of the organs of speech or of aphasia might appear—but not a single word was articulated! Questions were, however, readily understood, and were answered by nods and shakes of the head, signs, and even actions. It was very curious and interesting. Afterwards the guide re-assumed control, and quite an important test—the money-box case hereafter recorded—was given by him on behalf of the dumb communicator.

But this idea of the invasion of the medium by the Control, and the displacement of his controlling intelligence by a foreign one, is not the only theory of trance mediumship, and though it is the one more generally held, I think, it is not universally agreed to.

There is a second theory. This is that the Medium is mesmerised, or to use the modern term, hypnotised, by the control. The difference is most important, because the method would be different in practical operation. The Hypnotism theory means that the medium acts as any subject acts under hypnotic control by an incarnate operator: his conscious mind is in abeyance, and his sub-

conscious mind receives the suggestions of the operator and carries them out. There are many reasons—not the least important being that precedent sanctions inference—why this may be the truer view. Moreover it would account for a good deal that remains puzzling—even suspicious—about even good trance control, the somewhat play-acting impression conveyed by foreign accents and broken English *attributed to the control, but which lessen as the sitting proceeds, and especially as more engrossing subjects are mentioned.* It also carries with it the corollary, disheartening to the Spiritualist, but a useful warning to the student, that this making a working partner of the medium's sub-conscious mind may cause any sitting to be a mixture of genuine messages with the medium's subconscious ideas, a possibility which personally I am almost convinced is sometimes a fact, particularly when it is a question of the conditions of Life after Death, and have alluded to elsewhere. We must never allow ourselves to forget that the important thing is *what* is said, not *how* it is said, and the value of things said must be tested by whether it is possible for the medium to have had them in his own mind before any other theory whatever is considered.

At the same time, this theory, though more in agreement with facts that we know to be facts in

connection with the phenomena of Hypnotism, and even tempting though it be, as thus providing a more familiar and perhaps a more rational explanation than the idea of invasion does not seem to me to fit all the facts nearly as well. It sounds very plausible when *only one control* is operating, but it is most difficult to believe in the case of a succession of different controls, as happens with not a few trance mediums, and when these controls have consistent and strongly marked characteristics of speech and manner, which always appear when that control comes, and are maintained unvaried during his period of control. It is a knotty point, and might repay careful investigation and experiment from that special point of view, but on the whole the invasion theory seems to fit the facts best, and will be the one assumed in this book as the working hypothesis in considering trance phenomena from the spiritualist point of view.

Most trance mediums are also clairvoyant in the waking state, and it by no means follows that they will use the trance method. Mediums always say that they have the power to allow or not to allow trance-control, and good ones will seldom do so with a stranger unless he has at least been introduced by some one in whom they have confidence. This is a measure of precaution on the part of the medium which is quite comprehensible. He

believes that he evacuates his organism and entrusts it to another, thereby depriving himself entirely or almost entirely of any knowledge of what will happen while he is psychically absent, and of all control of what may happen during that time. Trance mediums usually say when they awake, if asked, that they have no knowledge of what has passed, and they certainly betray none as a rule.* If that is so, it is natural that a medium should not care to surrender his normal control unless reasonably sure that his confidence will in no way be abused, just as we should not allow a complete stranger to introduce into our house guests of whom we knew nothing. It is easy to imagine, for instance, the kind of abuse of confidence which a female medium might reasonably fear when getting a sitting to an unknown man.

They also require to have some expectation that the sitter understands something of the nature of mediumship and is prepared to abide by certain implied, because generally understood, conditions. For instance any medium will tell one that a sudden awakening from a condition of deep trance

*There would seem to be many stages or 'depths' of trance between a waking and an entirely unconscious state. It even varies with the same medium. 'I have been very deep this morning,' is a not infrequent remark which appears to have been borne out by the nature and 'symptoms.'

produces a nervous shock the consequences of which can not be foreseen, and which may not only impair his power for weeks to come, but may produce actual serious physical illness.

Again, if a medium thinks that a sitter is not a genuine enquirer, but an unscrupulous and hostile individual whose conduct cannot be foretold, and who may wilfully represent for his own ends what passes, he is not going to trust his control, even, to protect his reputation—in fact he is not prepared to allow such a person to hear anything of which he will be able to make improper use. Nor is he willing to place his full powers at the disposal of someone who will not appreciate them. To put it bluntly, he will not cast pearls before swine. That is his point of view, and it is not unnatural.

A few words may not be amiss before leaving this description of the theory of mediumship from the point of view of the medium, upon the general evidence for its probability as distinguished from the particular evidence of tests.

All who have had any acquaintance with judicial procedure know that evidence is of various kinds and of varying value. Some evidence amounts to direct proof. So many people, who know a man named William Brown quite well, and who are not believed to have any motive for giving false testimony, declare on oath that they saw him in a

given house at a given time. Generally speaking, this amounts to proof that he *was* in that house at that time, unless the evidence is strongly rebutted. On the other hand, the evidence may be circumstantial. Brown told several people that he was going to the town where the house is situated on a certain day. He was seen to leave his house in London at a time which would admit of his being in that town at the time stated. A taxi-driver swears that he drove him to a terminus in time for a train which would take him there. A hotel waiter identifies him as having lunched two hours later in the town in question. A pencil case similar to one which he was in the habit of wearing has been found on the floor of the house to which he is alleged to have gone, and he has not been seen wearing it since and can not produce it. None of these facts separately nor the whole of them collectively prove that he ever went to the house, and no one has seen him do so. They therefore furnish strong circumstantial and presumptive evidence that he did in fact go there, but they do not prove it.

The only possible proof evidence that the spirit of a dead man has been giving a message through a medium is that there can be no other conceivable explanation of this particular message having been received than that it came from the dead man,

because no living person knew or could have known the facts contained in the message. But the absence of such proof evidence no more entitles us to say that the message *did not* come from that source than the fact that no one saw William Brown enter the house entitles us to say in the face of the circumstantial evidence that he did not go there. A jury would be most unlikely to convict Brown on that evidence alone of having robbed and murdered an old lady living there, but that would be quite a different thing from their declaring, also on that evidence, that he never went there, and could not have gone there, and that the old lady must have been murdered by some one who dropped from an aeroplane on to the roof by means of a parachute and climbed through a barred and shuttered window !*

It will be for the reader to decide for himself whether or not the Book-test recorded in Part 2 is proof-evidence, like certain other tests that have been from time to time received, but there is a whole mass of evidence that cannot be called proof, and which depends for its value upon whether or

*Or shall I say by a member of a vast English Mafia? Or by the manipulation of a powerful distant electrical device which electrocutes people from afar by wireless, which are fair parallels of certain hypotheses discussed in this book?

not, we believe it. There is also a great deal of impressive circumstantial evidence which the investigator should study for himself in the numerous books to which reference has already been made, and in the volumes of transactions of the Society for Psychical Research. To all this evidence he can add, if he has a mind, by first hand experience.

But let me not be supposed to imply that the Circumstantial Evidence is all on one side. There are frequently puzzling things—things that do not seem to, ‘square.’ Along with communications which are obviously genuine, because it would have been literally impossible for the medium to have obtained by normal means the required data, we get disconcerting little incidents that almost make us revert to the idea of play-acting and humbug which facts have caused us to abandon. These things often, unduly impress the shallow observer, but nevertheless they occur and they cannot be ignored. Why does a particular medium so often deal in some speciality, some class of communication which the same purported communicators give through no other medium? It may be, of course, that the choice is entirely that of the actual control of the medium, who takes that means of conveying the information given by the communicator because it is the one found easiest.

But still, we should like to know. There is no getting away from the feeling that, looking at the matter in the most favourable light possible, the medium seems often to 'characterize' the messages themselves, as distinguished from the manner in which they are produced—that is, that sometimes all messages given through one particular medium seem to have a certain fundamental resemblance, something more subtle than mere outward mannerism, that they seem to reflect certain innate idiosyncrasies of the medium, rather than, as one would have expected, of the communicator, whose own individuality may be nevertheless reflected distinctly at the same time. Perhaps this is an inevitable feature of mediumship—one can see many reasons why it should be—but still it would clear the air if the control would only frankly admit it and explain it. Why are names as difficult to get through Mrs. J. as they are easy to get through Miss W.? Why are surnames so very very rare? Why will one communicator give his name when another cannot? A man knew me as, say, Cartwright. I knew him as Leckie. We met first at a school where surnames only were used. I never once called him 'Cyril,' and he never once in all his life called me 'Eric.' Yet a medium asks me whether my name is Eric, and tells me that

Cyril is here and wants to give me a message. Why? It seems so utterly unnatural.

But all the same we must not jump to the conclusion that these things are necessarily suspicious, much less that they disprove the Spirit Theory. But they are circumstantial evidence, of which there are many examples, and we have to take them into account until and unless we get a reasonable explanation of them.

But on the whole, if an intelligent person, with an open mind, prepared to be guided solely by the evidence, and to face whatever conclusion to which the facts may lead him, investigates these phenomena for some time, and talks to a number of paid and unpaid mediums and other persons interested, has several sittings with good mediums, and so on, he may not get positive proof which can be said definitely to exclude Telepathy, but he more often than not finds that theory, and indeed all other alternatives, gradually weakening and the Spirit theory gradually gaining strength. There is, in spite of many puzzling and contradictory things, a certain growing coherence and consistency that makes itself felt in time, and--after the first shock of mental readjustment to a new and possibly rather revolutionary set of ideas--there is a certain perception of orderliness and obviousness in the scheme, along with a logical

naturalness and consistency of behaviour on the part of mediums, which preclude the idea that their life is one long piece of trickery; people can not be always on their guard, and unpaid mediums have even no motive for being so. The accumulation of this kind of purely circumstantial evidence becomes after a time too strong to be entirely resisted, and while it is impossible to go into details about it in this book, it is nevertheless a very real factor in passing judgment on the pretensions of Spiritualism. The very inconsistencies and anomalies of mediumship which are many and most baffling fall into line after a time, and seem to fit the Spirit theory on the whole better than any other; for, as one becomes more closely acquainted with the subject, one realises the very limitations of mediumship and its variable success with the same medium as a natural and almost inevitable concomitant of it if it is genuine. But nevertheless these limitations and anomalies are a sufficiently marked feature, as I think, to make it quite a question how far any messages but the various forms of tests of identity which make up a large bulk of the communications are to be relied upon.

But by nothing is the thoughtful investigator so likely to be influenced in time except, of course, positive tests—as by his growing perception

of intelligent and consistent Purpose underlying many of the communications. Spasmodic Telepathy, or a Cosmic Memory (save the mark) could hardly by their most devoted admirers be endowed with purpose in their operation: yet distinct and unmistakable *Purpose* seems to reveal itself.

Now, though none of this incidental evidence is proof, any more than Brown's movements and pencil-case were proof, still, it is evidence, and it has to be weighed and considered like other evidence, and its correct value neither under- nor over-estimated. It is collectively insufficient, but it can not be entirely ignored.

It is most desirable that these phenomena should be investigated by the right people. Among these should always be trained scientists, but at the same time, the Physicist and the Physiologist are not always ideal investigators if acting alone. Their mind is too often centred upon concrete facts. Their training and habitual mental attitude deal too exclusively with the laws of Physics or other exact sciences, which, while they provide an indispensable mental training for any kind of scientific research, are apt to make their devotees take too little account of the human element in a matter like this which concerns obscure regions of psychology and in which every tone, expression, action, gesture, and the fine shades of motive in

human conduct are important. There are many things that cannot be expressed in formulæ or in exact or tangible results and the springs of human conduct are of them. So that we sometimes find the scientific man who would never make a rash or silly statement about chemistry or physics or physiology, and yet who will nevertheless attribute the most far fetched and improbable motives to his fellow men; he will judge evidence which concerns his own subject unerringly, but that does not always make him a good judge of evidence of a totally different kind. Why should it? But neither is the Psychologist an ideal investigator by himself. He is apt not to have the exact and precise habit of mind of the Physicist, and he also can only judge certain kinds of evidence properly. He is sometimes rather airily inclined to postulate new relations in Psychic Phenomena to Physics, which cause the Physicist in his turn to smile. The ideal committee of investigation would consist of so many scientists, so many mental specialists, so many experienced barristers or magistrates, and so many trained schoolmasters or other psychologists. These would then divide themselves into sub-committees, each of which would investigate certain defined groups of phenomena in which their special training would be most useful. The results of their different observations and experiments would then

be correlated and considered by the whole committee, and no one point of view would prevail in its published reports, which would be a symposic result of the investigations viewed from all standpoints and by the light of all sciences--physical and mental which bear upon the subject. The personnel of the Society for Psychical Research has made it by far the best body which has ever scientifically investigated these phenomena, and almost all the scientific literature of any value has emanated from that body or its members or from the American society of the same kind. They would appear to have discredited themselves in the eyes of the all-wise outsiders chiefly by honestly and fearlessly admitting the confusions to which the facts led them! So a body calling itself the "Magic Circle" has recently offered to settle the matter under the advice of a conjurer!

Yet many people have carefully read and studied this literature and, though thoughtful and open-minded, have been unable either to find fault with it or to accept it. It is a curious fact about this particular subject that there are many people whom nothing but first hand evidence will satisfy. It may be weaker than the published evidence so carefully collected and analyzed, but it must be first-hand. It is neither a logical nor a scientific frame of mind. We do not find any difficulty in

believing in the possibility of Wireless Telegraphy because we have never received a telegram by that means. Imagine a juryman who declined to convict a murderer simply because he did not see the murder committed, or a General Officer Commanding who declined to recommend a soldier for the V.C. on the grounds that he himself had not been present in the action to see the gallantry which had been alleged to deserve it.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that so strong and so ingrained in our minds is the idea that only by death can we communicate if at all with the Dead, and that they are irrevocably cut off from our physical life, that many, perhaps almost all people require first hand evidence before they can really fully and whole-heartedly *believe* that such communication is possible. They have a vague idea, when they only read or hear of evidence that although they can not detect it, there is a 'catch' *somewhere!* On intellectual grounds this is indefensible, but it is a fact that we have to reckon with in others and which usually we have to reckon with in ourselves.

There will therefore be readers of this book who will remain, after reading the evidence in it, not unconvinced intellectually, perhaps, but unable to take in and reckon with as a fact the conclusion to which it has led them, and yet sufficiently

influenced by it to feel impelled to seek first-hand experience.

In such case, I hope that the short discussions of the Fraud Theory and the Telepathic Theory upon which I have entered will be of value to them, and will not only guard them against attaching too much importance to these theories, but also against attaching *too little* importance to them. So many people begin illogically convinced that the whole thing is humbug. They are, however, sufficiently impressed by some testimony with which they meet, to visit a medium or two. In all probability they almost immediately find that the Fraud Theory breaks down hopelessly. Never having seriously considered any other possibility, they are then too apt to jump to the other extreme of too ready and too complete acceptance. The reason is that neither attitude of mind has been the result of real thought or had any solid basis upon which to rest. No great discovery is ever made without effort, and no great gift that the Universe has to offer is given for nothing; the possibility of communication would be such a discovery and such a gift.

But it is useless to seek first-hand evidence unless one is prepared to be patient and impartial in seeking it. And I do not think, either, that it usually comes as the result of mere curiosity.

Sometimes a given person never gets any important result from a given medium of whom he has heard on excellent testimony wonderful things. Then he is apt to say 'I thought so! I felt pretty sure that these tales would not bear examination!' And he goes away preening himself on his wonderful level-headedness, which has enabled him to see clearly where so many celebrated people have been blind. But he is quite wrong: he is just what he always has been—merely a common-place man who has again jumped to an unwarrantable conclusion on insufficient grounds. There is every reason to think that the success or failure of a medium in individual cases depends in part on the attitude of mind of the sitter, and still more on some obscure questions of psychic affinity that we do not understand at all. I should not like to put it as a definite conclusion, but my own experience with mediums suggests to me that I for some reason do better with female than with male mediums. Yet I am—I only make such a purely personal remark because of its relevance to the point—the exact opposite of what is called a 'ladies' man,' a bachelor, and more at ease in the society of men than in that of women. Still, the fact remains that almost all the really important tests which I have received, and the most satisfactory sittings with mediums, have been in the case

of those who happened to be women, so that the explanation, if it has any foundation in fact, must be something more recondite than any superficial one.

I can only give, from my own experience, the following hints.

Judge by the existing evidence if you possibly can; it may be a long time before you yourself get anything as strong.

If you must have first-hand experience—

Do not go to any medium unless you have really heard on good evidence that he has given striking tests.

Do not go to the same medium again, at least for some time, unless you get important evidence from him.

Go to one or two other mediums in any case before you visit the first one a second time; it curiously often happens that your first sitting with a particular medium is never equalled with the same one again.

Go anonymously if you possibly can, arranging the sitting through a reliable intermediary, and impressing him or her with the importance of suppressing your name and the smallest information about you.

Avoid any medium who objects to that arrange-

ment: he won't object as a rule if he is an honest man.

Try to give the medium confidence in you and to put him at his ease, whatever your private thoughts; it pays. By all means tell him frankly that you are an unconvinced investigator, but do not let him think you a suspicious and hostile one. Let him perceive that you have no reason to suppose him to be other than genuine and honourable (if you have you are foolish to visit him) and that you are not, say, a detective or a hostile newspaper reporter, who has prejudged him and is there solely to entrap him. Under the present ridiculous anachronism of a law that exists on the matter, it is possible for an incautious medium to get into trouble if his messages are of a particular nature, and many mediums have been caused great distress and discomfort by visits from reporters of one or two lower-class journals which are in search of cheap copy, and not in the least anxious to detract from its journalistic value by any weak prejudice in favour of adherence to the inertistic and humdrum path of Truth. The result is that mediums have an exaggerated fear and distrust of a usually perfectly fair-minded and honourable class of men.

Make as full a written record from the very beginning as you can, on the spot, as the material

presents itself, but explain beforehand that you propose to do so for purposes of scientific interest. Include in this record all your own questions and remarks, and in fair-copying, do not 'improve' the record.

Finally, if you do not get conclusive evidence at once, remember that very few people do. If you get it in the end, it is worth some sacrifice to have done so. It was fourteen years before I got evidence that was conclusive to me, though I was perhaps more unlucky or more obstinate than most.

I have purposely refrained from allusion to the emotional side of the question of communication with the Departed, and shall continue, except for the following brief remarks, to do so; because, when emotion comes in at the door, judgment is prone to fly out at the window, and it seemed to me that a bare recital of facts and a cold discussion of the scientific conclusions to be inferred from them would enable the question to be more dispassionately judged. Besides, I am writing partly for those with a more particularly scientific interest in the subject, and my own point of view is rather philosophic than personal or emotional.

But if the facts hereinafter recorded should after thoughtful consideration convince some of those who are sorrowing for a bright young life cut off

in its spring-time in the ghastly struggle which has just concluded, that he whom they mourn is not only as much alive as ever, but able to let them know it if the means be found, and if this book should therefore be of any comfort to such a mourner, that alone would amply repay me for the trouble of writing it. In any case, I felt that I had evidence sufficiently strong to make it a duty to submit it for consideration by perhaps better critics than myself. I have tried fairly to present both sides of the question, and there can be no possible motive for publishing such a book at all except the desire to serve others.

If, therefore, the reader does not accept the evidence as conclusive, it is not of the least concern to the writer. Let it be judged on its own merits. I cannot alter it for better or for worse. Moreover, I should keenly regret it if anything I said or any evidence that I produced should cause any one to forego the duty of independent judgment. On the other hand, if any of my readers choose to set aside all pretence to impartiality and to invent or adopt on pure hearsay some explanation which is credulous and foolish, I should regret it on their account, but not on my own. Sensible people who read this book carefully will, I hope, find that any such invitation to affront the cause of Truth will leave them cold and uninterested.

There are, however, two fairly common types of hostility to Spiritualism and the Spirit Theory which deserve a brief glance, as they are liable to mislead others. They are not a matter of evidence, but of opinion and feeling. The first of these obtains among certain kinds of Christian Believers. Some of these people have considered the actual evidence to be unassailable and therefore do not combat it as a matter of fact, but they characterise as wrong and unchristian any attempt at communication with the Unseen by means of a medium which they pronounce to be evil—the work of the Devil. I confess I do not understand that point of view, but it exists.

Attempts to communicate in this manner are usually undertaken from one of two motives or both of them. The commonest is the desire to obtain scientific proof of the survival of the Dead, and to know something about their present state of existence. The second is the wish to explore from a scientific point of view what seems to be a vast undiscovered realm of Psychology.

As to the second, with any one who really thinks that investigation of the phenomena of Nature, which *must* be the result of the operation of the laws of the supreme Lawgiver Himself, can be wrong, it is impossible to argue. We can only say to them that we regard our brains and

opportunities as among the ten (or five) talents given us to use, and we intend to use them. Many great and far-reaching scientific discoveries of the past have been regarded in exactly the same manner by people whose intellectual descendants now profit by them as a matter of course. The portion of a sermon quoted in the Author's Foreword to this book should be a sufficient corrective to any one whose doubts about the legitimacy of Psychic Investigation have been raised.

Any objection to the first motive is equally difficult to understand. Such evidence as there is, in the nature of the majority of the communications, is directly contradictory of the idea that they can be diabolic in origin. It would be poor business on the part of the traditional Satan to use special means to induce people to lead a noble and unselfish life ! And few people will be found ready to admit it as likely, if they should be satisfied that their Dead have been able to communicate with them, that the latter must be acting as agents of the Devil. Moreover, as hundreds of people who were agnostic in their views have been brought through conviction by this kind of evidence to belief in Survival, and, by the same road, in many cases, to a renewed acceptance of the Christian teachings, one wonders that Christian believers should not rather welcome it with open arms.

Also, one does not quite understand why they should accept the writings of St. John the Divine, Isaiah, and other biblical prophets as having been divinely imparted, and yet characterise highly moral messages coming to a clergyman named Stainton Moses as anathema.

The other objection to mediumistic phenomena is more comprehensible. It is a feeling of repulsion from the idea of communicating with our dearest friends through a medium. I fear it is to some extent due to the fact that mediums usually belong to what is considered a lower social stratum. Is there, then, not a rather foolish element of snobbery about it? Moreover, it should be remembered that the medium in trance is supposed to be non-existent as a human being for the time. He is merely an organic mechanism. Besides, if one is blind, one may be obliged to have one's letters read and one's replies written by an attendant or secretary, and however intensely we may dislike this, we do not cut ourselves off from communications with our most intimate friends in consequence while in that case the 'medium' knows every word that passes, which is presumed not to be so in trance control. And if the departed friends, whose characters we are apt to consider superior to our own, even to idealise, are not too fastidious to use such means of communication, why should

we be? And is such sensitiveness on our part a sufficient reason for withholding from them the opportunity to communicate if they be able and desirous to do so?

With these few remarks, I will leave the two commonest objections to Psychic Research. There are, however, a good many other reasons for the great hostility that undoubtedly exists towards mediumism and Spiritualism. Some people have made up their minds that there is no conscious existence after death, and our favourite dogmas die hard—as they ought to do if they were based on serious reasoning—but to an intelligent man, his decisions should always be servants, to be politely but firmly parted with if they are no longer of use to him, not masters to rule his intellectual household. Some minds are perhaps unable to conceive the rather abstruse psychologic ideas involved in mediumship and to regard it as other than an imaginative fairy-tale. Some have so ground into their minds that the whole thing is deception that that dogma dies hard also. Some find that certain details of the ideas of Spiritualists seem to contravene their own ideas of the nature of the hereafter, but as I shall show, it is by no means essential or even safe to attach too much importance to them, as it is most doubtful how far such teachings are even the result of genuine communications at all.

Some are so thoroughly imbued with the idea that Death is a final separation till our own death shall occur that the re-adjustment of their ideas involved is too great a feat of mental gymnastics for them. Some can not see why any one should desire any other evidence of survival than that of the Christian teachings, and think that the attempt to obtain it is little less than blasphemous, but they should remember that not everyone is able to believe in these teachings.

And many have been so accustomed to dismiss the whole subject as being the crass superstition and credulity of a number of deluded people, that the idea that these same people, whom they so despised, should turn out to have possibly discovered a truth which they in their cleverness had set down as humbug, is naturally highly disagreeable. So much so, that having declared that if the phenomena should after examination be vouched by reputable scientists they would accept them, they pronounced some of the first scientists of the age to be imbecile or senile as soon as they did so!

Finally, there are those who, while even yielding, perhaps, their belief, look upon the whole subject as tending to produce dangerous and unhealthy emotionalism and reckless self-delusion and folly. Their point of view is not without justification; but they should remember that it is entirely an

individual and subjective matter. Suppose everything claimed by Spiritualists to be true, such a truth, like other truths, like other forms of thought, like Christianity itself, is to each one of us what we make it ourselves. The unbalanced mind will be in this, as in other things, still unbalanced, and had better have left it alone; the sane and rational mind will view it in a sane and rational spirit. We have no more a right to charge upon discarnate communication the faults in its interpretation than we have a right to attribute Bolshevism to the sane Social Reformer, or the Spanish Inquisition to Jesus Christ.

Many of these views are not at all unnatural, though I disagree with most of them--all of them, indeed. Every one should, as a duty, try to formulate distinct views upon important questions of public interest, and they are bound to vary. The only intellectual crime is in forming them upon insufficient grounds. If the necessary study of this subject can not be given to arrive at a well-founded conclusion, the mind should remain open, and . . . shall I say, the lips sealed?

I am not to be understood, in this description of the Spirit Theory, to be accepting it in its entirety, or to have yet advanced any important evidence for its truth. I have put the point of view of those who have done both in order that the

reader who has no first-hand acquaintance with it may have a fairly accurate idea of its nature from a non-partisan point of view. I hope that the day may come when we shall have much wider knowledge of the whole subect, and the more impartially and the more intelligently it is viewed, the more likely are we to get further light upon it. Let those who study it at least be acquitted either of unworthy motive or of an unjustified charge of folly or of wickedness. Let them continue the work with courage, patience, and an open mind, swayed by evidence and not by desire. Let the conclusions to which the facts lead them be fearlessly faced. Then there shall be light, for the Truth must in the end prevail.

THE “ FRAUD ” THEORY

The commonest theory advanced in explanation of the phenomena called ‘ spiritualistic ’ is that of fraud on the part of the medium or sensitive. Though this explanation has long ago been found hopelessly inadequate by any one with any serious claim to recognition as a psychic investigator, it is usually the one adopted by the ordinary sceptical outsider who has not himself studied the subject, and therefore a brief discussion of it is desirable.

It is perhaps a somewhat loose use of the word ‘ fraud,’ but under this head it is proposed to discuss any form of the theory that the information—especially the ‘ tests ’—given by a medium during a sitting, has been, whether or not with deliberate intention to deceive, procured by him or her* by normal means, and used for obtaining money from the credulous. That is to say, the suggestion that the communications which he attributes to discar-

*(N.B. The Masculine pronoun will throughout be used to denote mediums of either sex.)

nate spirits are really derived from the knowledge which he has obtained by enquiries made, by reading and investigation of records and archives, by hearsay, or by his own normal powers of observation and inference, as distinguished from knowledge which can be attributed to Telepathy or some other super-normal function.

The reasons why the 'Fraud' or, if preferred, the 'Normally Acquired Information' Theory, is so commonly advanced are these: first, because there has undoubtedly been, and there almost certainly is, an amount of deception in the aggregate not inconsiderable on the part of a certain number of mediums, a fewer number than is currently supposed; secondly, that the whole subject lends itself to this possibility to an extraordinary degree; thirdly, that mediums are usually paid for their work; lastly, that a very considerable proportion of the large body of men and women who call themselves 'Spiritualists' habitually make no attempt to protect themselves from it. They receive, wrapt and awestruck, anything that any medium of the flimsiest pretensions may say to them. They treat as the gospel of the angels the wretched hotchpotch of Swedenborgism, Theosophy, Stainton Moses' writings, Yoga, and the Bible that many mediums put into the mouths of their soi-disant controls as a description of 'conditions in the

spirit-world.' They continually impart information instead of requiring it. They accept as established, without question and without tests, the identity claimed by any supposed communicator; and indeed, should the latter fail to produce such evidence, themselves obligingly supply it unasked, even to the very name.

Let me describe the sort of thing which is only too common. The scene, a sitting room in the house of a medium of sorts. Present, the medium and a 'circle' consisting of some twenty ardent Spiritualists of the lower middle classes—people of small education and with no scientific knowledge whatever. The medium professes to go into trance and to be controlled. Perhaps he really does and is, for that matter. 'Lizzie, I am here!' says the control, impressively, addressing a woman whose name is well known to the medium and several others present. 'Oh! Is that, *you*, Bobby?' is the delighted reply, followed by 'Do you know where I was last night?' Bobby: 'Yes, I was there. You were at the Spiritualist Service in the Hall in Smith Street; I saw you.' Lizzie (awestruck and serenely oblivious of the fact that half the people present were sitting in the front row with her, while the medium of to-night was on the platform opposite to her for two hours) 'Isn't it marvellous? They know every single thing we do!'

When the various 'Bobbies' present have offered equally satisfactory proofs of their existence, the control perhaps tells the circle a few of the marvels of spirit life.

It does not necessarily at all follow that no 'Bobby' has communicated, but it does follow that the communications are utterly valueless as evidence or as anything else, that a medium possibly originally sincere and honest is encouraged to follow the fraudulent path made so absurdly easy to him, and that intelligent outsiders derive the impression that the whole subject is a matter of self-delusion by silly dupes who have only themselves to thank if they have been humbugged. Robert Browning, in his ugly little poem 'Sludge, the Medium,' shows that at least the medium is not the only person to blame if he is dishonest.

I should be sorry, however, to be misunderstood in the remarks that I have just made. If, on occasion, I refer in these pages to credulity and foolishness, and to an unscientific attitude of mind, on the part of a large number of persons who call themselves Spiritualists, I do not thereby intend to imply that anything like the whole body of them are guilty of these faults. Such is far from being the case. Indeed, there are probably much fewer of such people than the outsider is apt to think. As almost always happens with every large class

of people, professing unusual views, the many quietly sensible persons suffer in reputation for the folly of the often comparatively few who, by their lack of discretion, draw upon themselves public attention; and personally I have no doubt that a great deal of the contempt and hostility with which Spiritualists as a body have been visited is quite groundless as far as a great many of them are concerned. The large body of the public to whom Spiritualism spells anathema require a convenient stick wherewith to beat those who associate themselves with it, and the charges of credulity and folly are sufficiently justified in the case of a certain number to provide a ready weapon. Among the body of men who, whether or not they call themselves Spiritualists, are virtually so, are thousands of educated and thoughtful people, and even not highly educated and yet not entirely unthoughtful people, who certainly believe in it implicitly—in my opinion too implicitly—but are sane and sensible in their views of phenomena for their belief in which they have substantial reason—a belief which scientific investigation more and more tends to uphold rather than to discredit. Such people are the first to regret the noisy indiscretion of those who force upon public notice their distorted versions of these phenomena, in season and out of season, on the slenderest grounds.

The man who sets down the whole body of Spiritualists as all ignorant, silly, and deluded people is himself betraying ignorance, and he is unjustifiably aspersing a large class of his fellow men, many of whom are very likely his intellectual superiors, and doing a signal disservice to both science and public opinion.

Therefore when I do allude to the credulity and folly of Spiritualists, I refer to the undoubtedly large number of them of whom the charges are true, and not to the possibly much larger number who are steadily trying to eliminate that element as much as possible from the teachings of the Spiritualistic religion—for such we must now call it—although it is usually believed in by people who are also staunch believers in the recognised Churches.

It is not solely to scientific investigators, but also to Spiritualists, that the world has cause for gratitude for a large amount of well-vouched-for test evidence. As claiming, in a modest way, to belong to the former, and emphatically not to the latter class, I feel the more bound to make this explanation, and to express the hope that any references to folly on the part of Spiritualists will be read by the light of these brief remarks.

Therefore, though the kind of thing I was just now describing is true of certain kinds of mediums

and of certain kinds of sitters, it is by no means typical of all mediums or of careful investigators. I have heard mediums reprove sitters for giving away information: they do not like it, because it tends to bring them into disrepute, and besides they are genuinely anxious to prove the truth of the phenomena in which they are sincere believers. It is not 'phenomena' (save the mark) of the kind I have just described that Lodge, Barrett, Wallace, Myers, Crookes, Conan Doyle, Le Bon, Lombroso, James, Hyslop, Hodgson, Sage, Sidgwick and other scientific investigators have devoted a large part of their lives to studying, and by which almost all of them have been ultimately convinced.

Especially do the phenomena called 'physical' lend themselves to clever fraud—movements of furniture, sounds of music and of bells, 'apports' of hot-house flowers, ghostly hands touching the face in the dark, materialized or partly materialized forms, also in the dark, and so on. Personally, I have never witnessed any occurrences whatever of this nature, but owing to the many exposures of mediums the outside public seem to have a general impression that spiritualistic manifestations consist of nothing else. It is not, however, my intention to discuss phenomena of this nature, since I have had no opportunity of observing them, and the more as I have never thought them of any

particular interest unless they were subjected to close study from the point of view of their relation to the laws of physics as we know them. I shall therefore confine myself to the questions of fraud in respect to "test" communications which claim to be messages received by means of automatic writers, waking and trance clairvoyants, deep-trance control, and the like.

Let us here understand what is meant by a 'Test.' A Test message is one by which the supposed communicator, a friend or belonging of the sitter, endeavours to prove his identity and his existence by alluding to something which was known only to himself and the sitter, or at any rate which could not have been known to the medium by normal means. The scientific investigator requires that such a test shall also exclude the possibility of any form of Telepathy, or in fact of any source of information, normal or supernormal, except a discarnate one, but that will be dealt with presently.

The Fraud theory, as applied to communications purporting to be of this kind, is that the medium has acquired by normal means all the information about the sitter, his life and his family history which enables him to give apparent tests of identity, the object being to make money out of

the sitter and out of other persons to whom the latter may recommend him.

Now let us examine the Fraud Theory. Let us even assume (what is frequently not the case) that the medium knows previously to the sitting the names and addresses of the sitters who come to him in a given week. A sitting usually takes from an hour to an hour and a half, sometimes longer. The fee to the medium varies from 10s. 6d. to a guinea, but is more often the former figure, and very seldom more than the latter. The number of sittings held in a day is usually not more than four, and, like other people, the medium generally takes Saturday afternoon and Sunday 'off.' He may perhaps from time to time have, say twice a week, a 'circle' in the evening, at which from twelve to twenty persons may be present, each paying a fee of two shillings or half-a-crown.

Now for the finance of his 'fraud,'

22 sittings a week (at (say) 15s.,	£16 10s.
2 circles of 15 persons (at 2s. 6d. per head,	3 15s.

£20

It would hardly be possible to get a clever enquiry agent or detective for less than £5 a week, and two such, fully employed, would never

be able to carry out the enormous and yet carefully concealed researches into family archives, the exhaustive enquiries, the skilful 'fishing' interviews with living persons, etc, necessary to supply the information given in even five or six sittings, often arranged by complete strangers only two or three days beforehand. But suppose that they could. Their salaries would make more than a little hole in twenty pounds a week (I have very considerably overstated the average figures so as to give the theory every possible chance) and what about the out-of-pocket expenses of the detectives? They would more than eat up the remainder.

Or is the medium himself supposed to do it all? Even so, the out-of-pocket expenses remain. And what a life! Sittings from 10.0 to 1.0. Sittings from 2.30 to 4.30. Circle from 8.0 to 10.0 twice a week. Allow two and a half hours a day for meals. In the remainder of his time the medium must procure precise and exhaustive information about at the very least ten different persons, and at the most some forty or fifty! Let the reader work it out for himself.

Of the extreme difficulty, not to say the impossibility, of his obtaining much of the information at all I have said nothing. And how anyone who has made the acquaintance of an ordinary medium can credit the kind of person he is with the Sherlock

Holmes faculties of brains and education required to carry out such complete and delicate enquiries, I confess I fail to understand.

Besides, can any one produce any evidence whatever that such enquiries ever have been made, on any scale either by mediums or by detectives? Is it feasible to suppose that a whole system of espionage like this has been entirely concealed? This kind of thing is on quite a different plane from clever conjuring with dolls, wires, india-rubber gloves and the like.

And now how about the anonymous sitters? How can we explain the results with sitters who come to the medium giving an assumed name or no name at all---persons whom the medium has never seen? With any good medium such sittings are easily arranged, and indeed, so far as I am concerned, if a medium objected to that arrangement when I desired it, I should at once suspect his bona fides and have nothing more to do with him. I have found, as a fact, that they welcome the arrangement; this could scarcely be wise if they depended for their results on obtaining information by enquiry. The best mediums give often half a dozen such sittings in a week. And still the tests come.

These objections to the Fraud theory in this form are so obvious that recently a fresh and truly

extraordinary idea was put forward. It was, if I remember aright, that there existed 'somewhere' a kind of central bureau of information run co-operatively by the mediums themselves—a sort of Medium's Union, which collected and collated a common fund of knowledge about individuals among the public for the general benefit of members of the association, so that (I suppose) as soon as Mr. So-and-so had arranged a sitting with a medium, the latter sent or went to the bureau and was supplied with the data necessary to enable him to deceive the sitter. It is difficult to write patiently of such an idiotic hypothesis, or to discuss it seriously, and yet it is often sufficient for even such a theory as this to find its way into print for quite a number of people either to acclaim it in the thoughtless spirit of its conception, or to suppose that its originator must have had some evidence of its existence. It might be thought superfluous to discuss such an idea at all, but for the reason just mentioned a few of the most obvious objections should be put forward. I must therefore treat it with a seriousness which it does not in my opinion deserve.

I can only see two systems upon which such a bureau could be supposed to conduct its operations, and these two systems might be conceived to be co-existent and to overlap. The one would be that

the mediums themselves supplied the information to the bureau, whose staff collated and arranged it for the benefit of the fraternity as a whole. The other would be that the Bureau itself collected the information by means of enquiry agents or private detectives for supply to the members.

Either system might not be utterly inconceivable did the sitters consist solely of a definite and not too numerous class of persons whose identity was known, who constantly consulted mediums, and who were the only people who did so. But this would in practice render the greater part of the work nugatory. There are, no doubt, a certain number, or rather a very uncertain but probably large number, of persons who periodically visit mediums as other people go to church. But if, rightly or wrongly, these people think they have grounds for confidence in a medium, they generally keep going to the same one, or perhaps at most not to more than two. Why not? They are usually people who believe anything whatever that a medium tells them.* In fact all this fund of know-

*It is true that mediums like Mrs. Piper have been for long periods investigated by the Society for Physical Research or by single scientific investigators, but in these cases precautions have been taken which made reference to outside sources of information impossible.

ledge would scarcely be necessary to a medium dealing with most of them. It is not for such as they that he would require material for bogus tests: they are happy without tests, bogus or otherwise.

But just the same difficulties exist as in the previous case when we were considering the medium acting independently.

The average medium has neither the time nor the money to devote to the research.

Not one of them in a hundred, had he these two things, appears to have the necessary brains and education to conduct the enquiries.

Concealment on such a large scale is virtually impossible.

Many of the sitters come having given assumed names or no names, and the medium has no idea, even when they arrive, who they are.

Many come but once or twice, and most at but a few days' notice.

Finally, whatever difficulties a medium would have in collecting information would be increased by the wider scope entailed. But when we turn to the second system—that of detectives employed by the bureau—the difficulties seem even greater; at any rate they present themselves in a more striking form. Do but consider the financial aspect of the question. Let us assume a membership of

1000 mediums (and there are probably a good deal more than that). Allow each medium an average of only five new sitters a week, say 250 in a year. It is a very low estimate. Even if the Bureau could by some marvellous means foresee exactly who would obtain sittings in a year, it would be faced with the modest task of collecting information of the most detailed and private kind about no less than a quarter of a million people annually! Can the author of this hypothesis have any idea of how a private detective has to conduct his enquiries? What kind of a staff would the bureau need? How many detectives at say £250 a year would be required? Not to mention General Manager, Secretaries, Clerks, Office Expenses, Postages, Telephones and Telegrams, Stationery, Travelling Expenses of Agents, Bribes to Servants, etc., Colonial Branches (a most essential feature) and so on? That is one way of looking at it. A simpler way is this: *The total cost of making the necessary enquiries about any given person would be on an average about ten or twenty times as much as the fee for his sitting.* Rather a difficult bureau to finance, I imagine: where is the return on outlay coming from? But as the bureau could have no idea who would or would not want sittings, our quarter of a million would have to be multiplied by x , and to x the reader with a genius for

statistics can attach whatever value he pleases!

The perfect bureau would seem to require a dossier about every adult British subject. Think of the galleries of photographs needed for inspection by the medium to identify anonymous sitters who were having a second sitting, and who, of course, would be charmed to hand their photos to perfect strangers—unless their servants can and do *always* steal them.

All this leaves out of the reckoning the fact that countless persons who have had successful sittings with good mediums can tell you that the idea that any enquiry agents in the world could obtain some at least of the information which they have received as tests—often confidential matters known only to one or two members of the family—is laughable.

And this modest little organisation, which could in reality not perform the work, has kept itself so secret, and its numerous agents have been so clever, that no member of the public—not even the gifted author of the theory—can produce one tittle of evidence that it exists! And yet, how is this? How about the Recruiting Tribunals during the late war? Can their records not help him? There has been such a tremendous rush to mediums owing to the many sad bereavements, that the unhappy detectives of the Bureau must have been sadly overworked in shadowing the relatives, and their

employers *must* surely have claimed their services as 'indispensable?' Seriously, is there any credulity of the most foolish Spiritualist that rivals that of the 'hard-headed, intelligent' sceptic? Well, well! Perhaps it was a joke.

I should in justice to a much-abused and persecuted class say that on the whole I have---except in one case*---found the mediums with whom I have had to deal perfectly candid and straightforward and free from any tendency to ask 'fishing' questions.' More than one has commenced by cautioning me on no account to give answers or to ask questions in such a way as to convey information, and one, on two separate occasions, declined his fee because the sitting was not very successful. As a rule they seem to be simple-minded, sincere and good-hearted people, rather perplexed as to the real nature of their peculiar powers, and not without scientific interest in them, genuinely willing to assist by the observation of test conditions towards a better understanding of the subject, puzzled and disappointed when they fail, and delighted when they succeed. And since we do not condemn the whole legal profession because of occasional dishonest solicitors, or the whole medical profession

*Not recorded in this book. She was easily detected and seemed to want me to supply the tests.

because of occasional quacks, we have no right to assume dishonesty in a whole class of our fellow creatures without evidence of it, merely because we do not understand to our own satisfaction the things they do.

Probably the real reason why people so welcome the Fraud theory is that mediums take money. But surely this is not quite a fair or reasonable attitude? Would the reader, would I, would any one, be prepared to give up from four to six hours a day to interviewing strangers upon their concerns for their benefit, for six days a week for years on end? Could we afford to do so? Should we do so if we could afford it? Yet the answers to these questions is not an absolute negative: there are here and there private mediums who do place some portion of their time at the disposal of strangers in this manner, and who will not accept a penny for so doing. Where does the fraud come in in this case? It will perhaps be said that the motive is a desire for notoriety—a form of vanity. But it is a fact, particularly where the medium is an educated person of some culture and social position, that notoriety seems to be the one thing the private medium of all things most dreads. 'Dear me!' I seem to hear some one say, 'I had no idea of the existence of such mediums.' That is just the trouble; too many people pass rash opinions and

make dogmatic assertions about this interesting and important subject of Psychic Phenomena without knowing a thing about it, and without having studied any of the scientific treatises upon it.

I candidly admit that, as stated in the Foreword, I was myself, until I studied the subject on my own account, firmly persuaded that the whole of so-called Spiritualism is a mass of humbug and self-deception. Certainly I did not flatter myself that a staff of marvellously clever detectives had been patiently investigating my history and watching my movements for a long time, but I felt confident that if I exercised ordinary caution and commonsense, genuine phenomena simply would fail to occur in my own case. It was not to satisfy myself that such phenomena existed, but to satisfy myself that they did not exist that I ever made the experiment of first-hand investigation. But the phenomena did occur, and I soon saw that there was some far more interesting and important solution to be sought than dishonesty on the part of the medium. And I venture to predict that any one of my readers who critically and scientifically, but impartially, and with due precautions, investigates this subject long enough—and he need spend no very considerable amount either of time or of money in so doing—will also arrive at this

conclusion. And though he may or may not in the end be satisfied that he has received communications from persons no longer living, he will at any rate be convinced that the messages can not possibly be explained by any hypothesis whatever of fraud or of information acquired by normal means, even though he know that such instances from time to time occur.

It is not merely desirable, but it is an absolute duty to Truth, to allow for the possibility of fraud in mediumship; indeed, it is indispensable to any serious pursuit of psychic investigation to prevent the possibility of its occurrence. It would be necessary so to do from the point of view of the scientific value of evidence, even if no medium had ever been proved fraudulent, which is unfortunately far from being the case. Still more necessary is it to make impossible the accidental acquisition of any knowledge by the medium by normal means—most good mediums prefer one's doing so. We must eliminate fraud and similar normal explanations before deciding that the phenomena are supernormal and testing them by the Telepathic Theory, just as we *must* in turn eliminate Telepathy between living persons before we decide that the phenomena have a discarnate source. But when the precautions have been taken and a given possibility has been entirely eliminated, we

must also honestly face the resulting conclusion, whether agreeable to our personal predilections or not, or else we must formulate some other hypothesis for which the evidence is at least equally strong. We must not perpetrate the folly of inventing impossible and absurd hypotheses in order to evade an explanation disagreeable to ourselves in defiance of the evidence. Nothing whatever matters—no private prejudices, no religious dogmas, no preconceived opinions—compared with God's eternal Truth, discovered as such by the use of all the intelligence and resources which He has given us. The person who allows his preconceived opinions or theories or desires or the hearsay views of others to warp his impartial judgment of evidence, not only shows himself incompetent to judge any important issue—conceive him as a jurymen trying a capital charge—but he is committing a sin; he is liable to lead others into error; the blind leads the blind and both shall fall into the ditch.

As I have already said, we must by no means forget the possibility of even a perfectly honest medium using information normally acquired and stored in his subconscious memory, or acquired from the sitter himself if not careful, so that though there may be no intentional deception, deception may result and the issue be obscured.

Every one who has engaged in psychic research and who has made any study of the peculiar psychologic problems which it presents, knows that the medium is during a sitting in an exceedingly sensitive condition. From the very nature of mediumship, as far as we have been able to discern it, we know that the mind of the medium must be in a highly suggestible condition in order to receive the impressions in the manner in which and from the sources from which he claims to derive them. It is more than probable that the ordinary suggestibility of the normal person by the speech* of others is exaggerated in the case of a medium, especially if not in deep trance, *e.g.*, a 'waking clairvoyant.'

If, therefore, a person engaged in this kind of research wishes to be able to place any reliance on the evidence he obtains, or wishes others to do so, he should take every possible precaution against the accidental acquisition of information by the medium. He should avoid distinctive peculiarities even of dress, especially, for instance, any kind of uniform. He must be most guarded in his conversation with the medium both before and after the sitting. During the sitting itself, he should, as

*I shall refer to hypnotic and telepathic suggestion in a later chapter.

much as possible, confine himself to the answers, 'Yes,' 'No,' 'I understand,' 'I don't understand,' and similar non-committal but definite replies. Above all, he should avoid 'leading questions.' It is not as easy to do this as might be supposed. Scrupulously careful as I always try to be myself, I asked the question during an important test recorded in this volume. 'Are they my books?' I really meant the question, I fear, as a trap, because I knew that they could not be my books. But it was a leading question, unfair as a trap, unwise as an enquiry, because it conveyed a verbal suggestion. I realised the moment I had spoken that I ought to have said 'Whose (or what) books are they?'"* The result serves me right: the answer was the only satisfactory point in an otherwise most remarkable test, and it now stands in the record because it would be uncandid on my part to omit it.

At the same time an obviously suspicious attitude showing hostility is always a mistake. It is an affront to an honest medium, puts a dishonest one on his guard, and makes a timid one nervous, and it denotes a psychologically undesirable frame of mind for impartial investigation. The judgment should be like a blank sheet of paper which has yet

* See sitting with Mrs. Leonard, p. 216.

to be written upon,—prepared, without suspicion due to previous prejudice, and without credulity born of a desire to be convinced, to receive and weigh certain evidence, and to judge impartially and impersonally of its abstract value,—the mental attitude and the outward behaviour of a juryman or a member of a court-martial at their best. The best conditions for the arrangement of an interview with a medium are—

(1) To arrange it through a thoroughly trustworthy intermediary who knows as little of oneself as possible and who will make the appointment without giving one's name to the medium;

(2) To choose a medium, if possible, who lives in some town or country where one does not oneself reside—where one is a stranger.

In the case of the most important of the sittings recorded in this book, I was in the very fortunate position, not always easy to attain, of being able to fulfil both these conditions entirely.

With this brief discussion of it, I will leave an aspect of Psychic Investigation which has but a moderate interest for me because of its utter inadequacy as an explanation of most of the facts, and will pass on to the much more important and interesting question of the Telepathic Hypothesis, a theory of which it is by no means as easy to dispose. At any rate, I venture to think that it will

puzzle the most bigoted adherent of the Fraud Theory to explain thereby any important part of even my own experiences recorded in this book.

THE TELEPATHY THEORY

Early in the history of the scientific investigation of the phenomena known as 'Spiritualistic,' students of them recognized that it was not sufficient to exclude the possibility of information having been normally acquired by a medium in order to establish proof of the continued existence of those who have died a bodily death.

Not only did they find that there appeared to be a number of supernormal phenomena which were quite independent of mediumship as the term is generally understood. Not only did they find authentic instances of what appeared to be apparitions of the dead and even of the living, veridical dreams, dual personality, clairvoyance under hypnotism, and the like*, but they also found much ground for entertaining the possibility that besides

*The Reader who intends to make any serious study of Psychic Phenomena should read first 'Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death,' by the late F. W. H. Myers, and other works by him, by E. Gurney, by Hyslop, by Hodgson, and by others.

many instances of these phenomena, those of mediumship itself were intimately connected with what appeared to be a new Force, and might even be entirely due to it. More than that, they found that the exhibitions of this Force seemed closely akin to, if not indeed identical with, the phenomenon popularly known as Thought-reading, Mind-reading, or Thought-transference.

The general conclusions at which they arrived were as follows. That there was a considerable number of indisputable facts for which no normal explanation accounted, and which were beyond the domain of accepted Physics. That to this class of facts belonged at least a considerable proportion of the phenomena reputed spiritualistic. That many of these facts indicated the operation of a whole set of new laws, extra-physical, and, till then, not recognised as existent. That certain of these facts appeared to suggest the existence of some means by which the mind of one living person could be influenced—sometimes consciously, of set purpose and sometimes unconsciously, without volition—by that of another living person, and possibly by that of a person not living. This communication appeared to take place without the intermediary of speech, sight, touch, hearing, smell, or any of the normal channels by which the human mind is ordinarily reached. It could not be called a sixth

sense, because its operation was apparently not connected with the nerves, which are the ordinary sensory mediums.

In order to explain this phenomenon, the existence was postulated of this new Force, probably psychic in its nature, and outside the laws of physics, by means of which mind communicated with mind.

To this apparent communication between mind and mind the name "Telepathy" was given. The actual word was coined by the late F. W. H. Myers, for years one of the pioneers of Psychic Research, under whose inspiring leadership most of this kind of study originated in England, and the author of the most important and scientific, as well as the most interesting treatise upon it that the world has seen.

Let us quite clearly understand a point of signal importance in regard to this. The facts are beyond dispute. *Telepathy is the theory which has been advanced to account for certain of these facts.**

*It should be clearly understood that it is quite out of the question to examine the evidence for Telepathy in its various forms in this book. The same applies to the Subconscious Mind. Such a discussion would require a large volume in itself, and the present writer cannot hope to add anything useful to the already exhaustive literature on the subject. Telepathy will only be discussed from the point of view of the Theory

Many people have failed to grasp this most essential distinction. It is necessary to find a name for any new process or new substance which appears to have been discovered in the realms of Nature, whether the truth of the discovery has been finally proved or not. Radium is the name which has been given to one such. Ether is the name given to a non-material medium provisionally postulated to exist in all space and to interpenetrate all matter. Telepathy is the name which has been given to the apparent process by which, it is postulated, mind communicates with mind independent of matter.

The necessity of giving a name entails a danger. This danger is that by labelling a hypothesis we convey to the 'man-in-the-street' an impression that it is a proved fact. Even the scientific student—even the inventor of a label himself, are likely to fall into this trap when, not on their watch against it.†

as it affects spiritualistic phenomena, mainly those recorded in Part 2 of this book. The student who desires to examine the evidence for Telepathy itself should consult the authorities already mentioned. By no other road can he hope to reach a position whence he can obtain a proper view of the problem what part, if any, Telepathy may be held to play in the phenomena called spiritualistic.

†There is no allusion here to Myers, who was ever scrupulously careful in such respects.

Let me repeat, therefore, that Telepathy is the name given to a *hypothesis* advanced as a *provisional explanation* of certain facts, and that it denotes our idea of the nature of the apparent communication that takes place between one mind and another—neither more, nor less.

Let us examine another label. Along with the apparent discoveries just mentioned, psychic investigators have found reason to suppose the existence of a region of the mind which is below* the level of the ordinary waking consciousness, a region of the personality in which mental processes can take place, by which mental impressions can be received, and from which mental impulses can be put forth so as to reach other minds, unconsciously, without conscious thought on the part of the waking personality. They have found evidence which suggests that in this stratum of the personality all impressions received through the medium of the senses, even if not conscious percepts, are stored, never to be entirely lost beyond recall of the memory, but lying dormant, as it were, like photographs on an undeveloped film. This is the

*Or above? Myers calls this region the 'subliminal' and the true consciousness the 'supra liminal' (above and below the threshold). I have sometimes wondered whether he should not have reversed the terms, or left out the former and used the latter for what he called the subliminal stratum.

only satisfactory explanation which they have been able to advance of certain abnormal occurrences which as facts are indisputable. There is evidence which suggests that this region of the personality is active during sleep, and indeed, more than that, that it is especially accessible and impressible during sleep, hypnotic or otherwise, and when waking consciousness is least active. (My own theory is probably not original, but I do not think I have met with it; if I have it has remained stored in my sub-conscious mind!) It is that the waking consciousness depends entirely on the activity and health of the brain, while this other part of the mind is quite independent of the brain except as an instrument of its expression by speech or action.)

To this region below the conscious the names 'Subliminal Personality (or Consciousness)' and 'Subconscious Mind' have been given. The former was invented by Myers. The latter was, I think, the term preferred by the American group of psychologists.

In order to get an idea of the nature of this theory of the existence of a sub-liminal stratum of the personality, or sub-conscious department of the mind, let us imagine a large business house, consisting of two floors in a building. In the upper floor are the partners, the controlling heads of the

business, who conduct all the most important transactions, decide the policy of the firm, and so on. In the lower floor are the clerks and messengers, the files and records, the books and documents, which concern the detail and the routine of the business. The partners in the upper floor allow much of this mere mechanical routine to go on independent of themselves; they have not time to be bothered with it, nor have they time to interview all the unimportant callers or to send out all the less important messages and notes. They do not expect to be worried about the payment of an office-boy's salary, or the purchase of half a dozen pen-holders, and they do expect the lower department to file all their letters and minutes of meetings, to remind them of their routine engagements, and to send upstairs copies and reminders of these things at the proper times or at a moment's notice. •

From time to time, they send down such matters for record. From time to time they make alterations in the general routine of the business, on which occasions they exercise supervision over the lower department until the alteration has been assimilated and can be trusted to work smoothly and automatically without their interference. From time to time, messages keep coming up from the lower department and presenting themselves

to the notice of the upper department. Sometimes these messages concern an important communication which has in their absence been received by the lower department; more often they concern this or that detail of the business of which it is part of the duty of the Manager downstairs to remind his chiefs upstairs. On occasion, when all the partners are away, the manager from below may even have to take temporary charge of the whole business, and when he does so, he betrays a meticulously exact knowledge of administrative detail and memory of facts, but a limited initiative, and is prone to rely upon any strong personality whose suggestions he will carry out so long as these do not appear harmful to the business or at variance with its traditional and habitual standards of honour, expediency and safety.

The analogy works out very closely, and may be held fitly to illustrate what is meant by the Subliminal and Supraliminal Strata of the Personality, or the Subconscious and Conscious Minds. The lower floor is, of course, the Subconscious Mind, where it is possible that the involuntary or reflex processes in the body originate, and which seems to be a storehouse containing an accurate record of all experiences and impressions—memories, in fact—which have ever reached it. From time to time, thoughts and memories so stored ‘bubble

up,' or are called up by conscious effort, from the subconscious to the conscious mind. The upper floor, where is situated the real active controlling spirit of the business, is the Conscious Mind, which deals with all important impressions received, and decides the action to be taken in consequence of them; it is, in fact, that part of the mind in which conscious reasoning and Will operate. The occasional absence of all the partners represents such a state, for instance, as Hypnosis, possibly as trance mediumship, and corresponds closely to the features of such states.

This idea of the practical nature of these two departments of the personality, and their relations and functions, is worth a little thought and exercise of the imagination, coupled with observation, from a general point of view. Quite apart from the investigation of mediumistic phenomena, this question has such an important bearing upon morals, good and bad habits, education, and indeed psychology in all its aspects, that it well repays any one to read the views of psychologists like Myers and James upon it; for it contains many lessons, and many warnings, and many suggestions, and many interesting lights upon 'that most interesting of all human studies, a knowledge of thyself.'

Nevertheless, I cannot personally feel entirely

content with the present conception of a division into Conscious and Subconscious Minds. This division is not wholly satisfactory, and it is a like dissatisfaction that has caused some psychologists to object to the terms 'subliminal' and 'subconscious,' and to hint at a preference for 'supraliminal' and 'superconscious.'

The fact is that neither analysis will do; because each by itself is unsatisfactory from a different point of view. When we consider the truly subconscious processes—habits, submerged but retrievable memories, atavistic survivals of instinct, and, it may be, even all the apparently spontaneous physical processes (like the action of the heart, intestinal muscular activity, and so on) which physiologists call involuntary or reflex nervous actions, we are clearly dealing with something of a lower intellectual calibre, as it were, than the processes of conscious reason, conscious will, and conscious thought.

Moreover, if it be the subliminal personality that manifests itself during deep hypnosis, again its intellectual activities seem usually to be of an unquestionably lower order than those of the physically conscious mind. The extreme, not to say undesirable, degree of suggestibility, which on the one hand will cause a precise and dignified bachelor to dandle and fondle a rag doll which he

has been apparently temporarily persuaded to believe to be a baby, and to perform other highly ridiculous actions, and on the other hand may be used to restrain his indulgence in some vicious habit when subsequently awakened, may be useful or not, according to the manner of its employment; but it is certainly something of a lower intellectual and moral order than that of conscious volition due to the proper exercise of the faculties of Will and Reason. The very fact that the morphia victim can be so restrained by post-hypnotic suggestion, is in reality the replacement of his own atrophied will by that of another person; it is the abdication of the true ruler in favour of a foreigner, however beneficent he be.

On the other hand, some of the cases of a secondary personality of an equal or even superior mental calibre to that of the normal personality, some of the manifestations of genius, and some rare personalities evoked during hypnosis, suggest a stratum of the mind which is even of a higher mental calibre than the latter.

In fact the behaviour in hypnosis of the *average* hypnotic subject on the one hand, and of the *exceptional* subject, and sometimes of a secondary personality, on the other hand, are too essentially different to make satisfactory the relegation of both

to the same (and a lower) stratum of the mind than that of the conscious.

And as the common inference is that it is that part, if any, of the personality that is outside the physically conscious which survives bodily death, we must—unless we are to shrink from death as an intellectual and even moral degradation—believe that something higher than the commonly conceived subconscious mind survives the physically conscious mind.

These reflections suggest, to me at any rate, the hypothesis that there may be, not two, but *three* departments of the mind, and that those would be, in ascending order of calibre, the Subconscious or Subliminal, the Conscious or Physical, and the Superconscious or Psychic. The spirit itself may be something beyond and above, and yet inclusive of, all three. As this is but a speculation, I shall not take it into account in subsequent observations, and shall confine myself to the old classification, but I think that it is worth consideration.

Again let me remind the reader that Telepathy and the Subconscious Mind are but the labels attached to theories formulated to account for certain occurrences, and are not in themselves proved facts. I have insisted on this point because it is necessary for the proper judgment of the phenomena in this book, and of all other well-

attested phenomena, that there should be no misunderstanding about it. In a recent newspaper correspondence, an opponent of the spirit theory, having been obliged to abandon the explanation by Fraud, said, in a very ignorant letter, that the occurrences 'must be simply due to Telepathy.' The words 'must' and 'simply' are amusing and illuminating. Their very use shows how completely ignorant must he who wrote them be of this abstruse and complex subject, and how conspicuously absent must have been even a superficial study on his part of the little that is known about them. He evidently thought that he was disposing of the phenomena by attributing them to a perfectly well-known law with which every one is familiar. He was not. He was taking, on very insufficient grounds, an unproved theory which he had not studied to disprove another explanation which he did not like. Whether or not the particular phenomena under discussion—I forget now what they were—might have been provisionally explained by Telepathy, is beside the point; his language showed that they neither could nor ought to be so explained by *him*. It is an extraordinary thing that while few men will venture to offer rash opinions upon say Physiology, Astronomy, or Physics, without at least knowing *something* about them, they will rush into print in

the most laughable way in connection with the especially complex abstruse and little-understood branch of Psychology* under present consideration, without having even attempted to study it. It is fruitful of error for even the serious student, but let us at least *try* to know something of it before we dogmatise.

Let me not be misunderstood. I have not been criticising the legitimacy of advancing the Telepathy Hypothesis in order to account for Spiritualistic Phenomena. On the contrary, it is one to which the very deepest consideration must be given. For fourteen years this hypothesis has risen before me like a warning spectre, and has stood in the gates forbidding entrance to the anti-chambers of the Unseen. 'I am here,' it said; 'You have to explain me away; you have to show that all this at first sight so plausible evidence is not my doing. These messages you have received can be explained as my work unless you deny my existence. Do you deny it? No. Then you will have to accept me till you can get rid of me. I am not a malignant invention of the Devil: I am one of the possible aspects of Eternal Truth.'

*Possibly, Psychology is a term which I should not have used. Psychology was originally a study of cerebral rather than of psychical processes, but modern authorities are considerably enlarging the field of enquiry. We want a new label here—but for the old, not the new, science.

If—if, I say—after some fourteen years of patient reading, thought, discussion and correspondence with others, and not a little first-hand investigation, I seem to have laid this most importunate ghost, it is only just recently that I have been able to do so. I owe the opportunity of fighting him on equal terms not only to a fixed determination to grapple with him honestly, and to admit defeat when beaten in order to recognise victory if achieved, but to the great kindness of Sir Oliver Lodge and his Secretary to a perfect stranger. This kindness has put me under a deep debt of gratitude which I fear I can never repay, but which I here gratefully acknowledge.

Even now, later discoveries may conceivably again bring me face to face with the old enemy. Such ghosts have an uncanny habit of reappearing, as in the legend the Phoenix rises from the egg hatched in the ashes of the fires which consumed its mother. Or, to resume the original metaphor, even now this spectre is only defeated, if he is defeated, at one point. He stands between us and all but some few very rare and occasional test messages, difficult of arrangement and difficult of verification. To all but these he says 'I forbid!'

For the Telepathy Hypothesis must be faced, and must never be lost sight of for an instant.

That is where I think some even critical students make their mistake. Perhaps they will say that it is I who am too obsessed with the importance of what is but a theory. Possibly they are right; it is a matter of opinion. Possibly Time will change my opinion; I cannot say. But in my view it is better to credit Telepathy with too great than with too small powers. Not better for the ultimate Truth, but better for what we are to admit as the accepted Truth till we know more. And better for our own peace of mind. So long as we admit Telepathy as a possible explanation of any given message purporting to come from the Departed, so long we keep any statement contained in it out of the fabric of our conception of religious truth or of our philosophy of existence. It remains for the time merely a matter of scientific and purely abstract interest. But as soon as we admit it as a genuine message from a discarnate source which we trust, we have to reckon with it as part of our conception of the Future beyond Death, and therefore as a factor and an ethical motive in the existence which precedes that future. We have also to reckon with the effect that the endorsement of it will have on the credulous, the superstitious and the uneducated. If the statements are true, it is certainly a pity that we should miss believing them, but it is better to believe too little than to

believe too much. It is the very importance of the subject-matter of many of these communications that warns us to be careful not to accept them as evidential on insufficient grounds.

Therefore, as said above, it appears to me that some even critical students of Psychic Phenomena have made one mistake. I am not the only person who has received tests apparently eliminating Telepathy, though I believe mine is an exceptionally strong one. I am even not prepared to accept some of the strained forms of the Telepathy theory which have been put forward. But there are, as it seems to me, people who, having been entirely sceptical on the subject for years, and having, after critical and scientific research, been convinced by satisfactory tests which eliminate Telepathy, are disposed to accept these tests as a guarantee of all the communications which they may receive, at the same sitting and through the same medium. I cannot but feel that we should be most cautious about this, most especially when a control professes to describe in detail the nature of the existence which we may have to admit that he or another has proved. Here I take my stand beside the spectre himself, when he again raises a warning hand and says—'You have not merely to disprove me in one case; you have to be sure that I have no hand in any of the cases. And there are now,

moreover, two of us; I have a companion.' 'Yes; I, too, am here,' says the Spectre of Normally Acquired Ideas; 'you had a right to dismiss me in regard to names and descriptions of your friends who have passed away, when given by a medium who did not know you, and other matters no medium could have known about: you had a right to dismiss my friend here in the case of matters of which neither you nor any one living knew, and only your Dead could tell you; but when it comes to views and descriptions of life in the Hereafter, you have to explain *me* away. I, too, am a possible aspect of the Truth.'

I do not assert that this information about the life beyond the grave is necessarily not true, or that it is not in any given case received thence, but I do say that we must exercise due caution in accepting it as either. The day may well come when some medium will be found whose history and personality will lay this second ghost—some child, who can not be credited with having read or imagined the conditions of the Hereafter described by him in trance—some raw native who can neither read nor write and can be proved never to have had association with any one who could impart such views, who has been all his life a believer in some heathen religion the nature and limitations of which are known. Let me find such a medium, and I am

prepared to record and consider and to the best of my poor ability to assess the value of his communications without prejudice or credulity, and indifferent as to whether they do or do not conflict with established dogmas. Till then, I can not lose sight of the Spectre of Normally Acquired Ideas, however skilfully he may be disguised even from the medium himself. Are these spectres of our own creating, born subjectively of our own too ingenious imaginations, or are they objective realities, who, like Poe's 'Raven,' will be for ever sitting at the chamber door and forbidding us to pass out into a knowledge of the world beyond?

I may have seemed to devote too much space to my own views. Believe me, I do so with no swollen idea of their importance, nor do I put them forward either finally or dogmatically. I do so because it seems to me that a warning is necessary: from too great a scepticism the Investigator may pass to too complete a belief. I also do so in order to show, as I hope, that I neither underestimate Telepathy nor shall lightly dismiss it as a possible explanation, and as I shall have to discuss it in various aspects in analysing the communications recorded in Part 2, an understanding on the part of the reader of my point of view will make clearer the arguments I shall use, and will enable him the better to assess what value the records themselves

have. Finally, I do not lose sight of the fact that one of the aspects of the spirit theory which most arouses the contempt and hostility of many not unintelligent people is the descriptions which mediums profess to give of the Life after Death.*

There is another quite opposite aspect of the Telepathic theory. In emphasizing the quite hypothetical nature of this theory, I remarked that some even careful students seem to be in danger of forgetting that a label does not change a hypothesis into a law. It is easy to *exaggerate* the possible powers and importance of Telepathy. As I have said, where all is uncertainty, let us err, if we do err, on the side of caution—that is, in this case, on the side of Telepathy. But provisionally to prefer the Telepathy theory to the Spirit Theory, in order to be on the safe side, is by no means to establish the former as the accepted explanation of any phenomenon whatever. Let me explain my point by an illustration.

Telepathy is the name given to the postulated process by which mind can communicate with mind without the apparent intermediary of matter, and the hypothesis includes the important inference that this communication takes place *direct* from

*For instance, H. G. Wells thoroughly enjoys himself in a very witty piece of satire on the subject in his recent novel, 'The Undying Fire.'

one mind to another. I agree that it probably does, but only because that is the simplest and most straightforward explanation on the market, so to speak. If two possibilities present themselves, it is on the whole wiser to adopt the more natural and direct explanation rather than the more complicated and indirect one, unless there is a greater weight of evidence for the latter or some special objection to the former: it is the beautiful logical simplicity of many important processes in Nature that strike one so often and so forcibly. But that is not proof. Let us suppose that a convinced Spiritualist, a 'whole-hogger,' if I may use the expression, is arguing with a sceptical scientific investigator. The latter says to the former—"I have studied these phenomena very carefully, and while I have seen abundant evidence that the subconscious mind of one person can obtain information from that of another person, I have seen no evidence that satisfies me that a spirit has ever really conveyed an authentic message through a medium. On the contrary, I have known not a few cases where such messages have been found to be incorrect on the main point of fact, and the incorrect version of the fact has been found to be the mistaken belief of the sitter or of some one else. I therefore conclude that the impression emanated from an incarnate mind, and that all such sup-

posed messages are really telepathy from the sitter or from some other living person to the medium.” Now suppose his opponent replies as follows: “I also have studied these phenomena. I have received mediumistic communications which entirely satisfy me that they are genuine messages from departed spirits, in which Telepathy cannot be a factor. And I have known several cases where such messages were correct upon the main point of fact, while an incorrect version of the fact has not only been the mistaken belief of the sitter, but has been by him obstinately insisted upon, and where he has afterwards, on enquiry, found the medium to be right and himself to be wrong.* I consult a medium whose bona fides and whose powers I have long since proved beyond possibility of a doubt, and as I have no reason to disbelieve one message more than another, simply because it is not in itself a test communication, I do not drag in Telepathy in one case when I have disproved it in others. Now, the other day a control of this medium—not the medium herself, she was in trance—told me a very interesting thing about Telepathy. He (the control) said ‘Your scientific investigators have made a fundamental error in their much prized Telepathy discovery. They think that the mind of

*I have had that experience myself. See Part 2.

one living person can by itself influence the mind of another living person without sign or speech. They are quite wrong in this. We on this side know that it is a necessary and fixed condition of material existence that people should communicate with one another by speech and by signs and by that means alone. There is a Purpose in it, and God did not make that a condition of material existence without reason. Had He wished people on the Earth-plane to communicate with one another by thought, he would not have provided them with the organs of speech. What your clever investigators think is direct communication between the minds of two living persons is not that at all. Such communications can take place in a way, but not in that way—not directly. What really happens is that we, who can sense the thoughts of living people, can receive the impression from the mind of one living person, and, as we are also by our thought able to influence the minds of living men, we can, if we choose, transmit the impression to the mind of another living person. We often do not wish to do so, and the guides of those people on this side will not always allow it, but that's the way, and the only way, in which it can be done.' That's what he said to me, and it seems to me perfectly reasonable; it explains for one thing, what has puzzled you, namely the

irregular and spasmodic way in which Telepathy occurs. Now prove to me that Telepathy takes place in the way *you* say, and not in the way *he* says.'

Understand that this is a purely imaginary discussion. I have never heard such a conversation, and I have never heard of any such message having been given through a medium—would that their messages were on that plane of thought more often. I am personally on the side of the sceptical investigator as to the 'mechanism' of Telepathy, not on that of his opponent. But it is difficult to see what answer the sceptic can give to the challenge 'Prove that you are right in your view of what happens.' And the theory of the 'control,' though I only put it into his mouth for the purpose of illustrating the entirely hypothetical nature of the Telepathic Theory, is not an impossible one. Indeed, if it were true, or if there were any particular evidence for it, it might even tend to explain some perplexing points that have arisen. Meanwhile, it serves to emphasise the need of caution in the other direction: we must be most careful what use we make of an unproved hypothesis. Scepticism, running riot, may become credulity.

The Telepathy theory is at once the friend and the enemy of the Spirit Theory. It, on the one

hand, provides the possible explanation of much that is claimed to be the doing of discarnate spirits. It on the other hand provides a rational and intelligible means, with evidence behind it, by which spirits might do much of what their supporters claim that they do; some such theory is even necessary to make those claims possible. If mind can communicate with mind, independent of matter, there is no reason to suppose that it is only incarnate minds that can so communicate with other incarnate minds. Once we assume the existence, or admit as proved the existence, of discarnate minds, Telepathy provides a possible mechanism or means of communication, and it is reasonable to suppose that spirits without a physical organism would be more likely to use and more skilled in using a purely psychic method of intercourse than those whose habitual communion is by physical means. But even suppose their existence to be proved, we could not in the vast majority of cases confidently determine which kind of Telepathy might on a given occasion be taking place—whether from the incarnate or from the discarnate. We seem to need to be able to tune two minds like Marconi instruments, so as to receive only the particular thought vibrations which we want at the moment to receive, and to cut out all other intruding vibrations. As a matter of fact,

the spiritualist conception of the mechanism of certain of the communications is not at all unlike that; the dispassionate student, however, suspects that, to say the least of it, the system of tuning is far from having been brought to reliable perfection!

It seemed desirable to begin with this general discussion of Telepathy before considering it in its actual application to those spiritualistic phenomena which purport to be 'automatic writing,' descriptions and messages received 'clairvoyantly,' and 'clairaudiently,' the same received by means of 'psychometry,' and the same delivered by 'controls' of mediums who are 'in trance.'

It will be easier for purposes of explanation to assume for the moment that the existence of Telepathy and the Sub-conscious Mind* are facts, and to discuss them as if they were.

There seems to be every reason for the following suppositions:—(1) That when the mind receives a telepathic impression or 'impact,' it is the sub-conscious stratum which is actually reached in the first instance. (2) That if the impression is received by the conscious mind, it is only so received through the medium of the sub-conscious mind. (3) That Telepathic impressions may

*I use this term not because I think it better than that of Myers, but because I think it is the one in more general and popular use.

emanate from the Sub-conscious mind of the Agent without knowledge or intention on his part—that is, without action of his conscious mind.

(4) That the conscious mind of the Percipient† is by no means always made aware of the impression received sub-consciously, though that impression may at some subsequent time emerge into the stratum of the Conscious, thus producing in the latter a delayed perception of the impression.

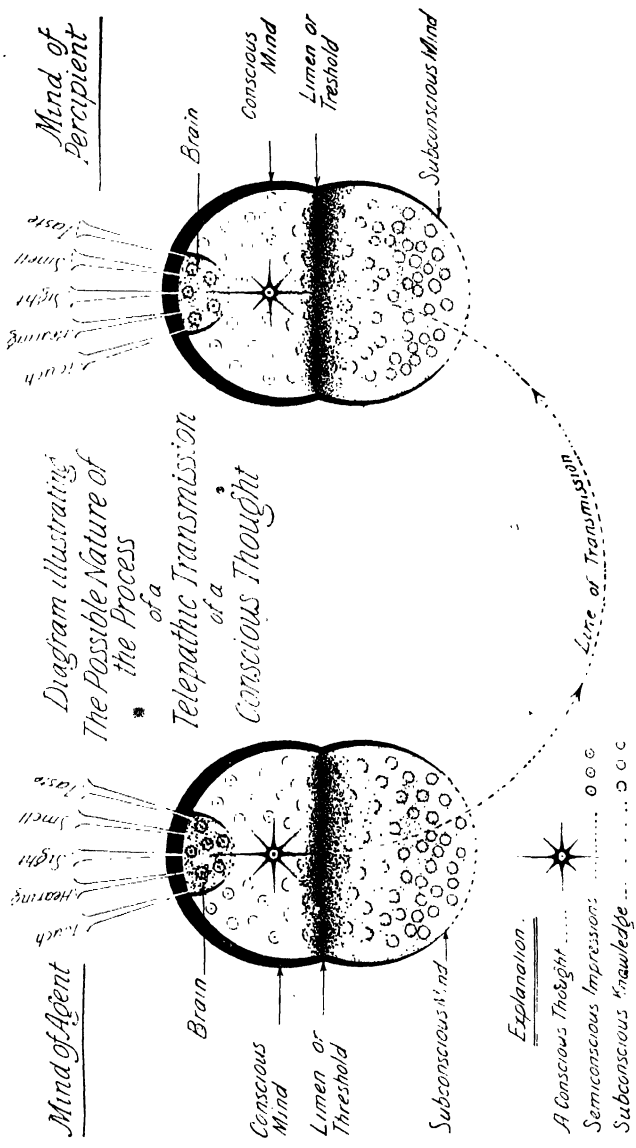
(5) That ideas in the conscious mind can be intentionally or otherwise conveyed to the mind of another. (6) That the transmission of impressions telepathically is not necessarily affected by distance.

(7) That ability to transmit or to receive telepathic impressions does not depend upon close relationship, or deep friendship or affection, but that generally speaking such relations favour it.

(8) That certain persons, including most children, are more capable of transmitting or of receiving (not necessarily intentionally or consciously) telepathic impressions than others.

One of the most important of these postulates from the point of view from which we are concerned with Telepathy is No. 5. There are two points that should not be lost sight of as to this. First, though thoughts in the conscious mind may

†For these terms see Glossary.



be intentionally conveyed to another and perceived by him, it is by no means often that this can be done at will; indeed, the cases in which an Agent can do so whenever he likes, even to a specially suggestible Percipient, are very rare. Secondly, though this is a very obscure and doubtful point, it seems probable that the Telepathic impact only leaves the mind of the Agent through its subconscious stratum, and that the following diagram illustrates what happens, the arrowed line representing the course of the supposed telepathic 'current.'

The chief difficulty in estimating the share, if any, which this communication between living mind and living mind may have in producing phenomena which, in its absence, would be attributed to a spiritualistic source, is the apparently spasmodic way in which it takes place. There has been practically nothing observed which enables us to say why it has occurred in one case, why it has not occurred in another case, why it has occurred between A and B, who are but acquaintances, while between B and C, who are deeply attached to one another, and in whose cases it would have seemed so much more natural, it has not occurred.

Inseparably bound up with the subject of Telepathy, is the suggestibility of a subject during

hypnosis, and the production of hypnosis.* As a rule, suggestions conveyed to the hypnotic subject in the hypnotic trance or sleep, are made verbally, and it is perhaps more probable that in this case they enter, so to speak, by the conscious stratum of the mind, though certain ordinary functions of the conscious mind be suspended for the time. It seems as if they must do so, if they depend for their success upon verbal transmission. But it would seem that in the case of an especially good hypnotic subject it is also sometimes possible to convey suggestions to him after hypnosis has been induced, mentally, without speech or sign, and from another room,† in which case it is more likely that it is the sub-conscious stratum through which the suggestion is first received.

This question is most important, because the hypothesis on which the Telepathy Theory is advanced as the explanation of phenomena reputed

* * It has now, as I shall presently try to show, been actually proved that the hypnotic trance can be induced from a distance so great, and with precautions so complete, that telepathy, or some similar supernormal influence is the only efficient cause which can be conceived.' (Myers—'Human Personality', 1903. page 207.)

† 'The subject's power of response to a question' (by a person not the hypnotist) 'was shown to be under the control of the unspoken will of the hypnotist. The result' (of the experiment described) 'which, according to the will that had been exerted, was "yes" or "no." (Human Personality, page 539.)

spiritualistic, is this : that the medium is in one or other stage of a state closely akin to, if not indeed identical with, self-induced hypnosis ; that he is at all times a person specially suggestible by telepathic impacts, but during a sitting especially so, as if his Sub-conscious Mind were like a house with the doors and windows left open, so that any intruder could enter freely and unchallenged, use the furniture of the owner, and deceive the latter's friends by putting on his clothes, and copying his handwriting on his headed note-paper, or masquerading as some other person altogether.† That just as there are hundreds of thieves wandering about who are only prevented from robbing houses by locks and bars, so there are countless telepathic impressions being launched unintentionally and unconsciously by the minds of living persons which, though they cannot penetrate through the closed door of the normal mind, can easily do so given the abnormal mental condition of the medium during a sitting. It is quite a question whether it

† 'Once deep hypnosis has been induced, a wide range of phenomena, both mental and physical, can be evoked at any time, and, with the consent of the subject, by any one.' (Milne Bramwell—Hypnotism, page 334.)

Note. But there is nothing in Dr. Milne Bramwell's work which suggests that when a patient is in a state of hypnosis induced by one operator he obeys suggestions from another person. Author.

may not be the case that *every thought* radiates telepathic impacts which can be picked up, somewhat as Wireless messages are picked up, by any mind sufficiently sensitive to their vibrations. Were we able to determine whether these various items of the hypothesis are really facts at all, or to what extent and under what conditions they may be facts, we should be able to determine fairly exactly what share—great or small—Telepathy may have in producing the phenomena in question. We are not, and it should never be forgotten that we are not.

The processes by which Telepathy has been suggested to be operating in the case of the phenomena under consideration are the following* :—

(1) The *conscious thought* of the *sitter* reproduced by the medium as the message of a spirit, or as something which he professes to see clairvoyantly, to hear clairaudiently, or to sense psychometrically.†

(2) The *subconscious knowledge* of the *sitter*—

*Of course it is assumed in this part of the discussion that Fraud and Normally Acquired Information have been already excluded as possibilities.

†It is by no means implied, and need not at all follow, that the medium is not perfectly honest in his belief that the messages, etc., are from a discarnate source. Many investigators think he is self-deluded or deceived by appearances.

that is, something lying dormant in his sub-conscious mind but not present in his conscious mind—similarly used by the medium.

(8) *The sub-conscious knowledge of some other living person than the sitter similarly used by the medium.*

(4) *The conscious or sub-conscious knowledge of any person, whether acquainted or not with the parties, and the conscious or sub-conscious knowledge which he possessed before his death of any person no longer living, preserved ever since in a permanent form, and sensed by the medium, not from his disembodied spirit but from the record left by his living mind and used as before. This is the most extreme form of the Telepathy Theory, and is known as the 'Cosmic Memory Theory.'* It was recently put forward.*

I should perhaps mention that there has been a preference on the part of some of the American school of psychologists for separating Telepathy and the Sub-conscious Mind, and treating them rather as two distinct explanations which may overlap, ascribing the acquisition of information by the sub-conscious mind in some cases to processes not precisely telepathic. It is a matter of detail, and does not materially affect the main question. For myself, I prefer to regard the

*To account for the Glastonbury Abbey Scripts.

subliminal stratum of the personality as the one directly concerned in all variations of the Telepathy Theory, and Telepathy as the means of operation, and shall discuss the question from that standpoint.

Let us now glance at each in turn of these four hypotheses into which the explanation by Telepathy seems to divide itself.

(1) *The Conscious thought of the Sitter.* This hypothesis is that in any case in which the medium tells the sitter, either as from his own mouth, or from that of his 'control,' anything of which the sitter happens to be thinking at the moment, he is really doing this by sensing the sitter's thoughts telepathically. There is some evidence that this may happen. I have read of at least one case where the medium was wrong on a point of fact and the sitter was found to have the same wrong impression, which at once rose to his mind when the question was alluded to. This case would not, however, be absolute proof that the message was not genuine, for the control might happen to have the same incorrect impression, derived, perhaps, when alive, from the sitter himself.* Still, it looks

*We must once and for all dismiss from our minds the idea that Death is likely to bring omniscience. It is a most improbable idea from a philosophical point of view, and it is noticeable that all controls insist to the contrary.

uncommonly suspicious. This is on the whole evidence against the Spirit Theory. Cases where the Control and the Sitter agree and are right prove nothing either way, and the reader must interpret them as he pleases. But where this hypothesis breaks down altogether is in the fairly numerous cases in which the *wrong* impression of the sitter, even verbally insisted upon by him, is stoutly contradicted by the control and the latter afterwards turns out to be right. I have myself had one excellent example of this kind of case (see page 159). In that case, my impression about the ownership of the box was wrong. I was subsequently proved to be wrong. Again in another case, I insisted to the medium that I should not have certain papers to sign, and she insisted to the contrary and proved to be right (see page 165). In this case the disagreement was in respect of a *predicted* event. Is it possible for such a thing to be due to Telepathy? If therefore, this hypothesis can explain certain cases, it cannot explain all. Neither can it explain the numerous allusions that almost all mediums, not even especially good ones, make to names and matters of which the sitter is not thinking at all at the time, and which he has often forgotten for years until they are thus recalled to him.

There is another objection to this hypothesis.

On quite a considerable number of occasions, I have found that I have been able to transmit thoughts to others telepathically. Such ability is not at all uncommon; probably every one has it to some degree, and most likely every one does it from time to time unintentionally. I have, however, done it of set intention. It occurred to me, therefore, to experiment in this direction with mediums during sittings. The theory being that they are at such times in an especially suggestible condition, why not, I thought, try whether I cannot prove the importance of the Telepathy Theory by thinking consistently of a certain name or matter during a sitting, and endeavouring to impress the medium with my thought? If they responded on a fair number of occasions by naming the particular person thought of, or alluding to the particular thing, I should feel justified in concluding that Telepathy in respect of conscious thoughts of the sitter was at the root of at least part of the reputed messages. But on no single occasion has this experiment been successful. With other people it has been by no means always so, but at least sometimes so. With mediums at sittings, it has never *once* been so. Other investigators have told me that their experience has been the same. All things considered, this is the least satisfactory but one of the Telepathy Hypotheses.

(2) *The sub-conscious knowledge of the sitter.* This hypothesis covers a much wider field than the last. It has little or no real evidence behind it, but there is a sufficient number of supernormal phenomena which suggest its possibility, and with which it would be consistent, to render it worth serious consideration as an explanation of a large number of the messages claimed to be spiritistic in origin. Its more hypothetical nature than that of the last render it more difficult of disproof. Its strength lies in the fact it cannot be disproved in a case of the medium correcting a wrong impression on the part of the sitter unless it can also be proved that *the latter has never had the right impression.* It is the strongest form of the Telepathy Theory.

There is every reason to suppose, from very good evidence indeed, that the memory of the Sub-conscious Mind is well-nigh perfect—perhaps entirely so. The case is often quoted of the uneducated woman who, when in delirium, puzzled her physicians by reciting long passages of Greek and Hebrew, languages of which she did not know anything from study, and of which she could not have given the translation of the simplest words. Spiritualists and members of certain other sects would have welcomed her performance with delight as either trance control in foreign tongues or what

is called 'speaking with tongues,' doubtless the same thing. Not so the physicians. They were not spiritualists but hard-headed scientists. They made exhaustive enquiries into the woman's past life, and they discovered that when a child she had been much in the room of an old scholar, who was in the habit of walking up and down his room reciting or reading aloud passages of Greek and Hebrew. The reproduction of some of these passages years afterwards by a person who did not understand a word of them and who probably did not hear individual passages very often would be a most marvellous psychologic fact, but it is not 'trance control.'

While, therefore, my corrected mistake about the box disproves the last hypothesis completely in that case, it can not be held to disprove this one, because I must have known, and in fact did know, who owned the box at the time when as a boy I saw it.

Still, there are two aspects of that kind of incident that need to be considered carefully.

First, does a sub-conscious knowledge exist unchanged if the conscious belief changes in regard to it? Is it not possible that when the conscious impressions are the source of the sub-conscious impressions, a changed conscious impression would replace the original sub-conscious one? The

answer is that it probably depends upon their relative strength and upon the duration and force of the new impression. If I keep my keys for some years in my left-hand pocket, I acquire a sub-conscious knowledge of that fact, and even if I used my keys when walking in my sleep (if wearing clothes, of course) I should replace them in the left-hand pocket when used. If, however, I decided to keep my keys in the future in the right-hand pocket, I should for some time be liable to put them into the left-hand pocket whenever I did not think what I was doing, because I should then be obedient to a sub-conscious impulse. A habit is probably the result of a conscious suggestion so often made to the Sub-conscious Mind that it becomes a sub-conscious action when the Conscious Mind is occupied with something else—there is a lesson for Education in that. But if I persist long enough in putting my keys into the right-hand pocket, I shall in time so completely displace the old sub-conscious impression by the new one, that even in sleep-walking I should replace them, after use, in the right-hand pocket.

The second aspect is this, and it is an important one. It is not a matter of evidence, but of comparison of probabilities. If it is argued that a medium is obtaining the correct impression from the sub-conscious mind of the sitter, in spite of the

latter's conscious thought and verbal suggestions, this involves a rather curious phenomenon. We have then to suppose that the medium is receiving two impressions—the one, a verbal one which is incorrect, the other, a telepathic one which is correct. Now, as a rule, verbal suggestions are certainly much stronger and more forceful than we have any reason for supposing that telepathic ones are. Yet the medium must be held to have ignored the stronger one and to have chosen the weaker one. Why should he? And not only that, but the sitter must be held to have at one and the same time put forth a verbal suggestion which he believes and an exactly contradictory sub-conscious one which he disbelieves. Surely this is straining the Telepathy Theory beyond the limits of reasonable probability? There is no evidence in support of the idea, and personally I find it a strain on the credulity. There are on pages 161, 162, 195, other instances of a like nature, but in the case of the little money-box there is an additional complication. The control undoubtedly sensed my conscious thought. When I was *thinking* that the box unscrewed at the top, she agreed aloud as if I had said so, so that in this case we should need to suppose that she sensed three telepathic impacts—one originating in my conscious thought that the box unscrewed at the top, one the correct one that the

box had belonged to my grandmother, and one the incorrect one, and out of these had by some marvellous discrimination chosen the two correct ones. We cannot of course say that it is positively impossible that the medium's mind performed this complicated process unconsciously to herself, but it does seem far-fetched. On the whole, it seems to me that incidents such as this greatly strengthen the Spirit Theory and greatly weaken the Telepathy Theory. But they neither prove the former nor disprove the latter. And it must be remembered that, were either theory disproved, it would not thereby conclusively establish the other: the disproof of one theory is not the proof of another. But where only two conceivable theories offer themselves, and there is evidence for both but none for any other, the complete break-down of one, though it stops short of actual proof of the other, nevertheless must be held to have established the other provisionally. The other then holds the field as a working hypothesis until or unless it be displaced. If the reader considers, therefore, as he well may, that such incidents alone discredit the Telepathy Theory, he must provisionally adopt the Spirit Theory, for there is no other. For myself, I have not thought this incident sufficient in itself to justify that decision; I was strongly influenced by the perfectly clear case of the reading of my thought

about about the unscrewing of the box (see also page 195 for an apparently similar case), and I suspended judgment till I should, as I hoped I one day might, obtain some evidence more convincing upon which to form a conclusion better substantiated.

(3) *The Sub-conscious knowledge of some other living person than the sitter.* We are now approaching a Telepathy Hypothesis which it is very doubtfully justifiable to advance at all. There is very little evidence that remotely suggests it, and it partakes of the nature of what I call the 'Why-shouldn't-it' arguments, because they usually take the form of the question 'Why shouldn't so-and-so happen?' A observes certain occurrences. The explanation of their cause offered him by B is repugnant to him. Finding no other explanation for which the evidence is remotely satisfactory, he says with no evidence at all, 'Why should it not be so-and-so?' It is the last struggle of the victim to escape from the corner into which the evidence has driven him, and very often results in an extravagantly improbable solution. Certain students have found substantial but not conclusive evidence that Telepathy, as at present conceived, takes place between incarnate minds in respect of conscious thoughts, and also some evidence distinctly suggesting that it takes place in respect of

sub-conscious thoughts, but both in the case of persons in some kind of mental contact and with some acquaintance and affinity with one another. But when it come to the supposition without evidence that people who have no acquaintance with, or affinity for, or knowledge of, one another, who have never met, who do not know one another's names, are in no way thinking of one another are still less aware of one another's movements at the time, and in fact are in no mental relation at all, are communicating, the one to the other, through a third person (the sitter) to whom also, several of these conditions apply at the time, a flow of accurate and detailed information, the sole purpose of which appears to be to mislead the investigator of Psychic Phenomena, it is really time for any person with common sense and any intellectual honesty to ask not 'Why shouldn't' this extraordinary phenomenon be occurring, but '*Why should it?*' There is no harm and no intellectual crime in advancing a feasible explanation in the 'Why-shouldn't-it' form so long as a serious attempt is then made to discover why it should, and, still more, *whether it does*. What justification there is for its having been advanced in the present connection is not so much one of logic or evidence as one of expediency. Though there are some who welcome it because they are so strongly prejudiced

against the Spirit Theory that they will catch at any straw rather than drown their preconceptions in the rising tide of evidence, more serious investigators take the line that they should exhaust every conceivable explanation, before adopting that of Spirit communications, owing to the importance of the latter from a general, as distinguished from a purely scientific, point of view. In their case the hypothesis is advanced, very tentatively and cautiously, as a just possible alternative, but the 'man-in-the-street,' not having troubled to acquire the knowledge that breeds caution, cheerfully puts it forward as a clinching argument long after almost all even of those who originated it have abandoned it in the face of further evidence. The final establishment of the Spirit Theory is a matter of such immense importance to the whole human race that it is in my opinion right to search for any other explanation before adopting this one, and then to test it scientifically. But such investigators keep a close watch on all new evidence and are prepared to abandon any remote possibility when the evidence supports another.

In the present case, therefore, as there is an enormous amount of evidence, whatever value we choose to place upon it, for the Spirit Theory, and a certain small but unassailable amount that entirely excludes this third Telepathy Hypothesis,

it can only be regarded at the very best as a just conceivable explanation of a portion of mediumistic phenomena, but so very unlikely that without further evidence it is almost negligible. The reader must please himself, but he has no right to adopt such a hypothesis without a most careful and exhaustive study of the whole subject of supernormal phenomena, and I venture to predict that after such study he is not likely to have much to say for it.

(4) *The Cosmic Memory.* All that has been said about the last hypothesis applies in a much greater degree to this one. It is a glaring case of the 'Why shouldn't-it' argument, lately advanced when all forms of the Telepathy Theory had broken down. Indeed it is practically an abandonment altogether of even the Telepathy Theory. The Telepathy Theory is that individual mind communicates with individual mind. This hypothesis does not involve Telepathy proper, as it consists in imagining a sort of Cosmic Pool of Memory—a kind of storehouse of accumulated thoughts both of the living and the dead. It postulates thoughts as a number of permanent impressions upon some obscure psychic stratum of the world, which can, as it were be dipped into by the sub-conscious mind of a medium, and whence the necessary material can be gathered like flowers in a field in order to deceive the medium

and sitter. It is really a psychic form of the Mediums' Central Information Bureau and about on the same level. The author of it can certainly not lack originality.

Not that the idea of a Cosmic Memory is in itself a new one, but the presentation of it as the explanation of phenomena for which Fraud and Telepathy fail to account is, I think, new. It was never more than a shadowy ghost in metaphysics at best. And now we are asked to credit it with a whole set of new functions. It is as if a mathematician took x , when it had a value which might be zero, or might be plus anything you like or minus anything you like—introduced it as a factor into a problem in concrete quantities, got a result of say $99\cdot9x^3$, and told us the answer was a lemon! The existence of such a tragically misleading region in the realm of metaphysics would at the least be a singularly malevolent pitfall to have been laid for the human race: are we to attribute it to a benevolent God?

“Are God and Nature then at strife,

That Nature lends such evil dreams?

Of what nature this etheric or psychic accumulator of Thought Force may be supposed to be, by what strange process it may be imagined to register and preserve the thoughts of living men long after they are dead, and by what marvellous power a

medium can be supposed, unknown to himself, to recall and interpret them, are all so many cheerful blanks in the hypothesis.

I can only say that the acceptance of a hypothesis such as this seems to me the very apotheosis of credulity, beside which that of the most trusting spiritualist becomes almost sensible through mere juxtaposition! There is only one psychic phenomenon that suggests the faintest analogy--and very faint it is--to this idea. This is what Spiritualists call Psychometry. Mediums who have been handed a ring or other article which has been worn by a deceased person, appear thereby to be assisted to sense circumstances of the owner's life, and to describe and name his departed friends. But this never seems to be possible except in the case of something worn or handled, which has been in close contact with the person, and it suggests quite other explanations than that of the Cosmic Memory, if it is even true at all. But the Cosmic Memory is superior to such adventitious aids as personal possessions of the deceased person. Given sufficient imagination, entirely irrespective of any evidential ground, one can, I suppose, explain almost anything, but it is a question whether such imagination is not rather a quality of the novelist of the Jules Verne type than of a serious contributor to our knowledge of supernormal psychology.

I hope that this short study of the various forms of the Telepathy Theory will be of some assistance to the earnest reader, as an introduction to the record of personal experiences which now follows. Evidence scarcely as strong as much that has since occurred has caused Myers and many others who, beginning as sceptics of spiritualist explanations, originated the Telepathy Theory, only later to abandon it as a solution of these problems; and in reviewing its different forms, I am reminded of a remark by an American character in a novel I recently read---

‘None o’ these things look good when you pass ‘em under a microscope.’

PART II

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

The only sitting previous to 1919 of which I have a record was one with a Mrs. Griffiths in September 1907. This was not in England. I heard some years ago that this medium had had an entire break-down in health and had ceased altogether to give sittings.

With one exception, therefore, this is the only sitting previous to 1919 which is quoted in this volume.

All the other sittings recorded but those two were obtained in England between February and September 1919, after my return from active service. They were all anonymous except those with Mr. Vango. The reason why I did not thus arrange in his case was that I had once previously had a sitting with him (not of great importance), on which occasion he had learnt my name. But he has never had any means of knowing anything else

whatever about me, or had my address, which has never been in any Post Office directory. He might have guessed that I had been in the army, but of course I took care to wear no kind of uniform when visiting him or any other medium. He told me that my face seemed familiar to him, when I saw him the second time, but he seemed doubtful about where he had seen me.

In every sitting in 1919, full notes were made during the sitting itself and written up in some neighbouring restaurant immediately after leaving the house. In the case of the Leonard sitting, a record as nearly as possible verbatim was made during the sitting. I have not in every case (except that of Mrs. Leonard) troubled to reproduce all the descriptions given; as the reader could not himself gauge their accuracy, they would tend to become wearisome; but where particularly striking items appear in them, I have quoted such in full. All incorrect items are faithfully mentioned, and all cases where a name or description has not been recognised.

Let me assure the reader, on my word of honour as a gentleman, that I have been scrupulously careful never by a word to improve or render more evidential anything said by a medium, or to depart from strict accuracy in confirming or not confirming anything said.

In some cases, certain actual names are indicated only by initials or a dash, where quotation in full might cause annoyance to living people. I regret the necessity for this, but I feel that I have no choice. However, what matters to the reader is whether the names are correct and identified by me, and he would in any case be dependent on my assertion, so that the actual name is not of the least importance. If he supposes that I have any motive for deceiving him, he is advised to close this book forthwith.

In a few cases, a small portion of a record has been suppressed for personal reasons of a similar kind. It is a pity, because some of these suppressed passages have evidential value, but it cannot be helped.

In all such suppressions, the fact is indicated in the record by asterisks.

I have thought it on the whole best to give the sittings in chronological order, rather than in order of importance. There are references by one medium to what has been previously said to or by another, and it would be troublesome to the reader to dodge about in order to compare dates in regard to them. Moreover, any seeming purposefulness alluded to by Miss Dallas, in her thoughtful introduction, is better perceived by the adoption of this method of arrangement.

For the rest, special notes are given when necessary on individual mediums and sittings.

I have referred in the Preface to the reader as ‘juryman.’ The questions which my ‘jury’ will have to answer in regard to each important item in the records are these :—

(1) Can the item in question be explained by Fraud or the acquisition by the medium of information by normal means ?

(2) Can it be explained by the reading of a conscious thought of my own ?

(3) Can it be explained by any other form of the Telepathy Theory ?

(4) In the light of our evidence for the existence of Telepathy, is its explanation by that means within the bounds of reasonable probability ?

(5) In the case of a negative answer to the above questions, is there any other reasonably possible explanation ?

(6) Is there or is there not evidence of Intelligent Purpose in any part of these records, or in the records as a general whole ? If so, can questions 1 to 4 be answered in the affirmative ?

(7) Finally, is each one of these phenomena to be attributed to (a) Fraud, (b) Telepathy, or (c) the Agency of Discarnate Spirits ?

II. THE GRIFFITHS SITTING

September 1907

This sitting was anonymous. I lived forty miles from the town in which the medium lived, and which I rarely visited; the town in which I lived was also a fairly large one.* It is next to impossible that Mrs. Griffiths could have known anything about me, and I had never met her before. The record I have is not a complete one, but full notes were made immediately after the sitting of some of the more important tests.

As I have not a complete record of this sitting, I shall only reproduce the most important items, and confine myself to those of which the record is complete. Until I was in England, some twelve years later, I never received any communications of anything like the same evidential value except one. Mrs. Griffiths was a trance medium, and purported to be freely controlled by various personalities, some of which had been known to me.

*60,000 to 70,000 inhabitants.

(1) During a correct, but not otherwise specially evidential description of my early life, the Control of the moment asked me whether I recollected sitting, when a young boy, in the fork of a certain tree by the seaside, with another boy, dressed in a Norfolk coat, a little taller than myself. (This was given to the control, he said, by one of my 'guides').

I suppose the matter had not crossed my mind for at least eighteen years, but it was quite correct. I used to sit in such a tree, close to the sea, with a great friend, C—— D——, and we were in the habit of reading aloud to one another. C—— D—— was a little taller, being nearly two years older. He is alive now, and the Vicar of a parish somewhere in England. I forget how he used to dress. This occurred 21 years before I saw Mrs. Griffiths, and 7000 miles away from where she lived when I saw her.

(2) I was charged with a message to the father of a young boy who was said to have given it to the control, and whom I had known before his death. I delivered this message: it was on a quite private matter; the boy's father told me that it was absolutely impossible for Mrs. Griffiths to have had any knowledge of its subject. I had none.

(3) In response to a request from me that some relation of my own should control the medium, a

control came who appeared to indicate by signs the liveliest satisfaction. The following then passed :—

I: ‘Can you not speak?’ The lips moved, efforts appeared to be made to speak, expressions of struggle and vexation came over the face of the medium, but no word was uttered. (The other controls spoke freely.)

I: ‘Perhaps you have never controlled before?’ Head shaken.

I: ‘Can you understand and hear all I say?’ Head nodded.

I: ‘You understand that I came here a stranger to this medium and not at all convinced about this matter.’

(Nod) ‘Then you do not mind if I ask for some proofs of identity from you?’ (Shake.) The medium then brought her hands slowly to her forehead; starting from the middle, she carried them down on either side above the ears and back behind them. (This exactly imitated the hair which my grandmother had worn.) The hands were then placed gently on the top of the head, as if pressing something down, and passed thence back behind the neck and downwards, as if suggesting long ends. (My grandmother always wore a white widow’s cap with long strings behind.) I: ‘Is there anything I am wearing which will serve as a test?’ (What follows is important. I was inexperi-

enced in those days, and the question was to some extent a leading one. I was wearing a ring on my finger, and either a tie-ring or a scarf-pin in my tie. None of these things had belonged to my grandmother. I was wearing a Norfolk coat—buttoned of course—and, in the lower left hand pocket of the waistcoat, beneath and concealed, a gold watch that had come to me from my great-aunt M——, the sister of this grandmother. When my grandmother was living, I wore this watch in the top or watch pocket of my waistcoat, and had only since her death taken to wearing it in the lower pocket.) The hands of the medium made feverish efforts to unbutton this Norfolk coat. I, therefore did so myself. The hand then dived into the *top* pocket of the waistcoat, and then a look of perplexity came over the medium, as if the control was puzzled. Finding that nothing more seemed to be ‘doing,’ I guided the hand to the lower pocket. Great excitement was at once manifested; the watch was taken out and patted, and the medium’s finger pointed to herself energetically. I: ‘But this watch was not yours. It was Aunt M——’s.’ This was answered by a vigorous nod, and thrice over, the medium pointed with her finger from the corner of the room to herself, and from herself to me; the corner, herself, me; the corner, herself, me. Plainly the meaning was ‘From her to me, from me to you.’

I then remembered that this was quite correct. The watch had been left me by my Aunt M——, who predeceased her sister, and the latter had kept it for some years, until I should be old enough to wear it, and had then given it to me herself.

(4) At this point the control changed, and a new control, self-described as a guide of the medium, told me that the last control wanted her to ask me whether I remembered her giving me something out of a white jar from 'high up somewhere.' I did not, and said so.* Then do you remember her giving you money when no one else was present?' I replied that I did, on occasions when I was going away to school. 'Do you remember her getting it out of a little box from somewhere in the corner of the room, a sort of cupboard?' I said yes, I thought I did. I asked, 'what sort of a box?' 'A little round box.' I asked, 'How did it open?' What follows is very curious and important. I was, while asking the question, thinking 'I rather think it unscrewed from the top,' but I did not say a word other than the last question. But to my surprise, the control said, 'Yes, yes! That's right!' and the hands of the medium made the motion of unscrewing a small box lid.

*I have, however, a vague recollection, of having, when quite a little chap, received from my grandmother sweets from some such receptacle.

Now the curious part of this test is this. It is true I remembered the box quite well: it was a little black money box with a slit on the top. The box was shaped on the model of a barrel, and the top unscrewed. I remembered receiving money from this box. But at the time when I used to do so, there was in the house not only my grandmother, but my great-aunt S——, who was not the sister of the latter. My strong impression at the time of the sitting was that it was my great-aunt and not my grandmother who used to take the money out of this box. I wrote home to my mother after the sitting, and mentioned this curious mistake, as I thought it. By return mail my mother wrote to me expressing wonder that I should have made such a mistake, saying that it was certainly my grandmother who used the little box, and recalling certain reasons why she did this unusual thing, and why it was not my great-aunt!

But there are other very important aspects of this test. It is perfectly evident that my thought about the unscrewing of the lid was sensed by the medium or the control: that is a clear case of the reading of a conscious thought. But along with my conscious thought about the unscrewing, was also my incorrect thought about the ownership of the box. If, therefore, Telepathy is to be held to explain this test, we have this curious phenomenon:

(a) that the medium sensed my conscious thought about the unscrewing; (b) that she ignored my conscious thought about the ownership and, despite that thought, gave it as a test; (c) that she also at the same time sensed a correct sub-conscious knowledge of mine as to the ownership, and used it to simulate a test—deliberately choosing between the incorrect conscious thought and the correct sub-conscious knowledge, and selecting the right one. Why? How? Are these things conceivable? Do they not demand a greater strain on the credulity than the simpler idea that the author of the test was really my grandmother and relying throughout on her own memory? This is discussed in the Chapter on the Telepathy Theory.

(5) Another control (unknown to me) purported to be in charge. As a good deal was said about my own thought, I asked 'Were you aware of a certain manuscript I sent home recently?' I must explain this question. I had shortly before this time completed a manuscript of a book, subsequently published, and had sent it to England. It was at that time actually on the water somewhere between that country and England. Now this manuscript had been at all times under lock and key, and its contents were known only to one person to whom I had read it aloud. This person had promised to preserve silence regarding it: I know that he would

not have violated his promise in any case, but subsequent enquiry of course confirmed that. When I asked the above question, the reply was given that the communicator was aware of the manuscript, and indeed had been associated with one of my 'guides,' who had assisted me in writing it. Some complimentary remarks then followed. Then—'But you have already had compliments paid to you about it.' I: 'No!' Control: 'Yes, you have.' I: 'No! No one has mentioned it.' Control: 'Oh, I do not mean the controls to-day; I mean your friend in—(naming the town where I lived) to whom you showed it and who thought so much of it.' This was perfectly true, but I had misunderstood the remark about compliments having been paid, thinking that they referred to the controls. I repeat, one single person only besides myself knew of the contents of this manuscript; he lived forty miles away, had never heard of Mrs. Griffiths, and had not,—I asked him—mentioned the book to a soul. I then asked. 'As a test, can you tell me the nature of that book?' The control vanished and was replaced by one who spoke in a high clear voice of a very characteristic kind. 'She said that she had come from 'far,' having been sent for by my guides, with one of whom she had been associated in connection with the book which I had been writing. She continued—

‘I had great trouble in displacing the control who was here just now, because you asked for a test she was anxious to give, but time presses and I had to. I think I can give the test better. Your book is not on religion, as such, but on some aspects of it.’ I: ‘Yes.’ Control: ‘It concerns the after-life.’ I: ‘Yes.’ Control: ‘It also concerns the Soul, the inner soul of man.’ I: ‘Yes.’ Then followed an injunction not to let anything discourage me about it, and a question whether I had not ‘covered a tremendous field’ in my treatment of it, and whether many things in it might not have had ‘each a book to itself.’ The idea being new to me, I answered doubtfully that I ‘supposed so.’ ‘Look over it again from that point of view, and I think you will see what I mean. There is a good deal of your own thought and personal experience in it, is there not?’

There is. Indeed, every thing about this book is absolutely true, including the very wide field covered. When I tell the reader that there are three chapters or parts, that one is called ‘Have I a Soul?’ one, ‘Have I a God?’ and one, ‘Belief and Unbelief,’ he can appreciate for himself the appositeness in all respects of the description given.

Now Telepathy can be held to explain all this, except the ‘tremendous field’ covered. The question is, *Does Telepathy, as an explanation, ring quite true?*

(6) The next control who—not long dead—had been much attached to me, showed lively satisfaction at meeting me. I was however at first in the dark about his identity. (It was a young boy.) In a pained voice he said, ‘Oh! *don't* you know me?’ I said, ‘I only see the medium, you know, and I am not clairvoyant.’ ‘Oh!’ (as if this was a new light upon things.) Then followed some conversation too private for repetition but which furnished an important test.

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Some readers may wonder that after this sitting with Mrs. Griffiths I should have had any reasonable doubt as to discarnate communicators being the originators of the test and other messages which I received. The fact remains that, though for the moment I was convinced, I had such doubts afterwards. It was conceivable that Telepathy should be the real explanation, provided that we ascribe to it certain powers for which there is practically no evidence, in the case of Nos. 2, and 4, and that we ignore the manner of presentation of the tests, as distinguished from the tests themselves, in all the cases. I shall pass no further opinion upon the matter. It is one for ‘the jury.’

THE SITTING

November 1907

This is the only case in which I shall refer to an occurrence of which I have no written record. I have called it a sitting, but the facts are really as follows :

A medium whose name I forget, but who I *think* was a Mrs. Place-Verey, paid a visit to the country where I was living in 1907, about the end of November. She had been, from the time she landed till a day or two before I saw her, at a town 500 miles away. I was taken by a friend to a house where were assembled some twelve or fifteen persons interested. I was only invited to go, the day before the sitting. I was unacquainted with the host or hostess, and have never met them since. I was also unacquainted with any one in the room except my friend. I may have been introduced by name, but I forget whether that was so. I am almost sure it was not so in the case of the medium.

The incident I record is a peculiar one. The medium said to me, ' you will shortly be offered a

post under the government.' (This was quite correct; I fully expected such an offer to take place within the ensuing six weeks, but I can see no way in which she could have known that. 'You will have papers to sign.' I said 'No, not that I am aware of.' (I had no reason to expect such a thing, and as a matter of fact did not.) She replied—'But I say you *will*. And what is more, you will have to be very careful how you sign them, or you will—' (here she used some expression which I do not recollect exactly, but which was to the effect that I should have some difficulty or unpleasantness or suffer some loss.) I was so convinced that she was entirely wrong that I did not even record the occurrence. Six weeks later the expected offer came. With it was a stereotyped form of agreement in which, as it read, I agreed in a certain contingency to accept a lower salary than I was prepared to accept, and than had already been named as my salary. I struck out the offending clause, initialled the alteration, and signed the agreement. I in due course took up my post. When the first draft for my salary came, it was on the *lower scale*, the contingency having meanwhile supervened. I wrote to the Department concerned and pointed out the error. Their reply was to remind me that I had signed this agreement. I of course replied pointing out that I had signed it only

after erasing the clause in question. After considerable correspondence, the matter was set right—from my point of view, that is!

I leave the reader to choose which form of the Telepathy Theory he may consider capable of accounting for this incident,* only regretting that I did not at the time make exact notes of the whole affair. But nevertheless, I am perfectly certain that I have stated the facts accurately.

*But there is a chance for an old friend of ours here. If a Cosmic Memory, why not a Cosmic *Precision*? It's nothing to throw off a trifle like that when you know the way!

FIRST VANGO SITTING.

March 10th, 1919

Note. In this and subsequent sittings, the following initials will for brevity be adopted :

Before remarks made by myself, the letter I :

Before those made by a medium *in trance*, the letter C (for Control.)

Before remarks made by a medium not in trance the letter M.

In every case where a portion of the record has been suppressed for personal reasons, asterisks, thus * * * * *, will be shown.

In every case where a name has been given, but for similar reasons only the initial or a dash has been printed, a dagger † will be put against such initial or dash.

It must not be supposed that because the whole of a record is reproduced I necessarily consider it to be of evidential importance throughout.

* * * * *

This sitting was a trance sitting. Mr. Vango had requested me to bring with me an article which

had been worn by any person with whom I desired to obtain communication. I therefore brought a pair of spectacles which had belonged to my father, and a brooch which had belonged to my mother. I first handed him the spectacles in their case. He could therefore not form any idea whether they had belonged to a man or a woman. Naturally I told him nothing.

Before commencing the sitting Mr. Vango asked me to be particularly careful not to give away information, and as much as possible to answer questions only by 'yes and no, so that I might be able to feel that I had not supplied him with any information, and the results might have a corresponding value.'

(1) An excellent description was given of my mother. Besides the description, the following circumstances were given of her last illness: 'There was previously trouble in the right leg. There was internal pain. There was an internal growth. There was a successful operation, but some time after the operation a rather sudden collapse.' (All these details are absolutely correct). I was said to be away at the time of her death. (Correct; I was in another country; she died in England in 1911) The word 'Mother' was given.

(2) I was wearing a diamond ring. The contraption mentioned this ring and said that she was shown

young lady. She emphasized that this lady was not necessarily dead. To get to her she said she was shown a journey of some distance. C: 'Water is shown. Was the journey across water?' I: 'No.' C: 'Then *to* water—to the seaside.' The numbers 5 and 7 were given. * * * * * C: 'Was there any connection between this ring and a small lady's gold watch?' I: 'Not that I know of.'

The circumstances were these. Some 32 or 33 years ago, this ring was presented by my mother to the headmistress of a school at which my brothers and I spent each several years. The school was 87 miles from London, and was at the sea-side. The lady was at that time quite young. She is alive still. At the time she told me that she had only accepted the ring on condition that it should return to me at her death. A little while ago she wrote to me that she preferred to give it to me instead of leaving it by Will. Hence I was wearing it. She knows of no connection with a gold watch, and I have no means now of verifying such connection. The numbers 5 and 7 convey nothing to me.

(3) An excellent description was given of my father. The word 'Father' was given. C: 'There is a feeling of 'fall' with both spirits; like a sudden fall; what is it?' I: 'I think I understand.' My father was described as being fond of books, and

as sitting in a room with many books. He was described as being neither an author nor a journalist, but as occasionally writing rather for pleasure. He was said to have died through a sudden illness.

The 'fall' refers, I think, to the sudden collapse which occurred in both cases (see 1). If so, it is correct. My father was taken ill very suddenly, and the illness lasted only two or three days. He habitually sat in a room with many books, of which he had with great pains had a very careful catalogue prepared. He was extraordinarily exact in knowing the position of each class of book, and almost each volume, which has an important bearing upon the Léonard Sitting. He wrote occasional papers of a literary nature, letters to journals, etc. A paper of his, that he completed just before his death, was read posthumously to the Philological Society.

(4) Mention was made of two houses in the family. One was said to be at a distance, in the country. The country hilly. The house high up and looking down into a valley. Grey or whitish like stone or concrete. C: 'It has a very square appearance, and it looks as if it had a sort of tower. Has it gone out of the family? He seems to suggest that, and to say that there would be no reason for keeping it now.'

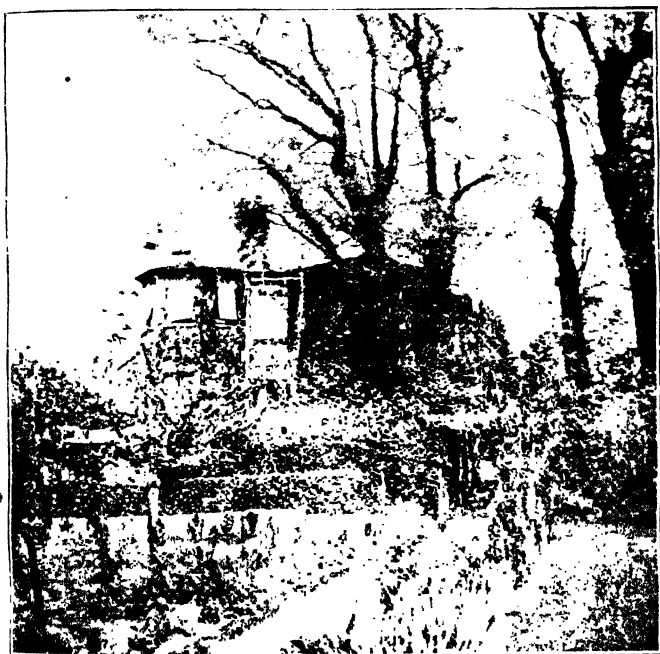
As a matter of fact, there were three houses in the family, when my father was living. At his death, one was got rid of, the one above described. It is situated at Sevenoaks. The country is very hilly; the house is at the top of a steep incline leading from the station to the town. It looks right down over a valley. It is built of brick, but is covered with some whitish grey substance. As to its shape and appearance, an inspection of the photograph of it here shown will show how accurate the description is. The lease was assigned at my father's death, as none of the family wish to live there any longer. There are now two houses in the family.

* * * * *

I now handed the medium the brooch.

The control said that the brooch belonged to the same person as the spectacles. I made no reply. He then at once corrected himself and said that it belonged to my late mother. (Correct).

(5) C: 'Between your father and mother is a child of one or one-and-a-half years old. He died rather suddenly. He stands between the two, as if belonging to them. Now he shows himself grown up as a young man.' The control added a remark explaining that he had shown himself as a child in order to be recognized, but had since grown up 'in the spirit world.'



“It has a very square appearance, and it looks as if it had a sort of tower.”

This is perfectly correct. My third brother died in infancy; he was one year old when he died. He has been mentioned before by other mediums. (See also Leonard Sitting.)

(6) The following conversation which I recorded verbatim now took place between me, the sitter and the control:—

I: 'Does my father recollect a sort of promise he left in writing?'

C: 'Yes.'

I: 'Can he tell me anything of the nature of that promise?'

C: (slowly and emphatically) 'I—am—here—to fulfil—that—promise—this—morning.'

I: 'Is that supposed still to be the control or my father himself speaking?'

C: 'The medium's guide giving a message from your father; those are the words he tells me to repeat.'

I: 'Will my father and those with him try to arrange a test which entirely excludes telepathy?'

C: 'They will try.'

I: 'A certain article of some little value of mine disappeared after my father's death. It would be an interesting test if they can find out where it is, if necessary, and inform me.'

C: 'They will see what they can do.'

The above is highly important. In the first place, in a letter written to us, his sons, some years before his death, to be opened only after his death, (which duly took place as intended), occurred the following sentence: 'I will communicate through a medium named Vango if possible.' I am practically certain that my father never met Mr. Vango himself, because we discussed the question of psychic phenomena freely when I was in England a year before his death, and he would have been sure to mention such a thing. Moreover I am pretty sure that I know why he never had, as I believe, any communication from a medium. My view has been confirmed by two close friends of his who were both convinced that he had never sought personal experience of this kind. But he knew of Mr. Vango from Miss Dallas; hence, I think, his choice of this medium in the above sentence. This was my reason for going to Mr. Vango again; in the ordinary way I should not have done so, simply because Mr. Vango knew my name, and I had decided on arranging anonymous sittings. I had to refer to the letter because I could see that the sitting was drawing to a close without reference to it.

In the second place, my request for a test must certainly be taken in conjunction with the Book-test in the Leonard Sitting. My mention of the

missing article also concerns both the first Brittain Sitting and the Leonard Sitting. It is most important to notice that to neither of these latter did I say what the nature of the missing article is, any more than to Mr. Vango. The significance of this will be apparent later. This article was an Autostrop Safety Razor in a nickel-plated box. It was left with other things in my father's charge when I went on active service the second time, and was the only thing which I could not find with my other property when I returned after his death. The house had been given up meanwhile, and my things had been stored in the house of a friend.

The sitting concluded with the abrupt question, 'Who is Jenny?'

I know no one of that name, but in two subsequent sittings with Mr. Vango, the name Jimmy crops up, and also—this is curious—in the second Brittain sitting. Is this a case of not quite accurate 'Clairaudience?'

THE X- — SITTING

March 31st, 1919

This sitting was arranged through Sir Oliver Lodge and was anonymous. At his request, expressed through his secretary, Miss Walker, I suppress the name of this medium. Sir Oliver gave me the reasons for this course, and they are cogent, but his wish would in any case have been sufficient. The sitting has little evidential value, through my fault, but I record it more particularly because it will interest those persons who are so convinced that all mediums try to fish for information from the sitter.

The medium asked for an object that had been worn by some one deceased, and was handed the brooch mentioned previously.

(1) A very fair description (quite recognizable) was given of my mother. Special mention was made of her hair being in two shades, showing as greyish in certain lights. When I last saw my mother in 1904, her hair was very fair, but those who saw her in 1911, when she died, have told me

that it was showing incipient greyness then, and have confirmed the description given above.

(2) A description commenced of a young woman about 26 and dark.

At this point, oblivious of an injunction in some typed notes which had been supplied to me by Miss Walker, I asked whether the name could not be got, because I knew no such person.

M : 'Oh, I wish you had not asked me that ; now I have dozens of names crowding into my mind.' After a short pause, the medium said, ' I am very sorry, but I am afraid you have spoilt it ; I can't get anything more. I was half out of the body and you recalled me with a sudden start.' After another pause this was in substance repeated, and the sitting prematurely ended. .

THE FIRST BRITTAIN SITTING

April 4th, 1919

This sitting was anonymous. It, also, was arranged through Sir Oliver Lodge. I went to the house, armed with an introduction worded—

‘Dear Mrs. Brittain,

The bearer is a gentleman to whom you may safely give an interview,’ and was signed by Miss Walker.

I saw Mr. Brittain, and arranged the date and time (three days afterwards) with him. When booking the Sitting, Mr. Brittain asked me what name he should put down. I said that for evidential reasons I preferred to remain anonymous. Mr. Brittain said that this was ‘quite all right,’ and that indeed Mrs. Brittain preferred it, as it added to the value of any results she might obtain. I gave fictitious initials.

* * * * *

(1) M: ‘While they are making up their minds

what they are going to do, I will give you a bit of clairvoyance.'

She then told me that I was shown to her, as a sort of allegory, as being in the middle of a rough uncultivated field. I marked it out very carefully, with a peg here and a peg there, at the corners. I dug a garden and planted it all round with little rosebushes. These rosebushes grew up and formed a hedge round my garden, a 'nice little hedge of roses in bloom.' I then planted the garden with a lot of beautiful flowers, and made a 'really nice little garden.' But still I went on 'dig-digging' in one corner, as though I wanted to dig up some one who was buried. 'And the spirits come and look over the hedge at your pretty little garden, and laugh because you go on digging like that instead of looking upward.'

Let him who likes pour contempt upon this pretty little allegory, but to me it does not present itself in a humorous aspect. It was, I take it, intended to convey that I was troubling too much with this question of Psychic Research, and should give my own intuitions and thoughts freer rein. At any rate I perfectly understand it.

(2) An excellent description of my mother was given. The only thing not correct was the age, which was too young. I made no comment upon this or upon any other point, but the medium said

178 THE FIRST BRITAIN SITTING

that she might be mistaken about the age, as the 'lady might be older, but, if so, was extraordinarily young in spirit, and with a bright, youthful outlook.' (This was absolutely correct, and a striking characteristic of my mother.)

(3) The name of a nephew of mine was given, with a strongly evidential reference which I am obliged to omit * * * * * *I am hospital very ill after returning from France!*

(4) M: 'There is something about an anniversary or birthday in an early Easter—an Easter in the early beginning of April.' (I think I understand the reference.)

(5) The name——† was given. This name, the medium said, was only symbolized to her, by my mother holding out bunches of ——† blossom. (The name is quite correct, and is that of a sister-in-law, and connected both with the name of the nephew, and, I think, the anniversary.)

At this stage, a voice with quite a different and not English accent announced, with stunning suddenness, 'Medie's gone!' I looked up from my writing and found that the medium, who up till then had been sitting up and talking in an ordinary manner, had fallen back in her chair with her eyes closed as if fast asleep. The control asked me to tell her if I should not understand all she said, as she did not speak English perfectly. Several names and descriptions then followed, given very rapidly,

and I was only able to make brief notes of the most essential points. The reader must therefore not suppose that the following is a verbatim record.

(a) 'A boy—no, older, 25 or 26, much interested in you, killed flying. Name Clark; (Clarke?) Christian name Johnny.'

(b) 'Old lady, very pretty, name Elizabeth.'

(c) 'Name of William. Very fond of you.'

(d) 'An L connected with your father's family.'

(e) 'Two brothers and a sister passed away with consumption. Not your brothers and sister, but all in one family. All passed away near together.'

(f) 'Lady, young, grey eyes, brown hair, named Sarah, Anne.' (?whether one person or two meant.)

(g) The name 'Harry' was given, followed by the words said to be addressed to me, 'Dear Boy.' Also the words 'Great thing if it can be managed.' This spirit, said the Control, had a great dislike to people who exaggerated. He was described as showing a gold watch and taking it out of his pocket.

With reference to the above names, etc.,

(a) I can not place this name. I have hitherto not succeeded in finding out whether such a person was killed when flying.

(b) This refers to a great aunt of mine and is correct.

(c) This refers to an uncle and is correct.

(d) I cannot trace this.

(e) The nearest I can get to this is that about 1892 a whole family consisting, however, of husband, wife, and grown up son, died within one week of Influenza followed by pneumonia. They were not relations of mine, but they were old friends.

(f) See second Brittain sitting—probably the same person.

(g) Harry was the name by which my father was often called. The words 'Great thing,' etc., are curious. I had said nothing to Mrs. Brittain about being anxious for a special test, but this is clearly to what it refers, I think. My father detested people who exaggerated. I remember that in 1917 he spoke with the greatest impatience of a remark by Philip Gibbs in the Daily Mail referring to the dome of St. Paul's appearing like a silvery cloud. He said it could under no circumstances look like a silvery cloud, and once walked me all round the cathedral to demonstrate that it was neither silvery nor the least like a cloud in his opinion! He was a little annoyed when I suggested that perhaps it reflected the sunshine in an early morning light. My father much prized a gold watch which had been a present to him from his sons. ,

At this stage, finding that the sitting was

drawing to a close without further reference to a test, I referred to the missing article, which I did not name or indicate in any way. It was not, of course, on account of the thing itself, which is easily replaced, but because it would be an important test. My father was the only person who would be likely to be able to account for its disappearance if anyone could. My brother and I (the former was Executor) had come to the conclusion that it must have been stolen. The control then said the following: 'Harold? Arnold? Someone has it. Can't get that name.' (I do not know those names, but the first *suggests* an attempt at the name of a brother.) 'It is in something resembling a desk. It is not stolen. You must not think it is stolen.. It is only misplaced. A younger man than you has it. It is at a place beginning with S.' I get the name——† with it.

The most likely place for this article to be would have been Sevenoaks. (If Telepathy why only S, and not the whole word?)——† is the name of my younger brother who is Executor of the Estate.

The Control continued: 'But it is *not* stolen, you must not think it is stolen.' All these remarks were made in a disjointed kind of way, without further questions from me, the control all the time interspersing them with words of encouragement

apparently intended to be addressed to the Communicator. At such times, the face was turned downwards and sideways, and the action of intent listening was made between the sentences.

C: 'I cannot get any more about it.' 'The medium is clairvoyant; let her try. Perhaps she can get it that way.'

The control appeared to cease. The medium woke with a start, and gazed about her in a dazed way for a few seconds, and then resumed her normal voice and manner. The reader should note and think over carefully those last words of the control in connection with what I have said about Trance Control in Part 1.

The medium now put her hand just underneath her chin, and said that the thing I had been inquiring about was a 'sharp thing,' and suggested the idea of being pricked. I repeat that I had given no indication whatever of the nature of the article. For all she knew, it might have been a photograph, a book, a piece of jewellery, in fact almost anything.

The medium next gave the names A—†, H—†, and Henry. (The two former are my own two Christian names, and the last my father's real name.) C: 'Why does your father show me papers *with nothing on them?* The papers have to do with insurance.' (On enquiry, after the sitting,

from my brother, I found that all the goods removed from the house at Sevenoaks had been stored at a furniture dealer's and *had not been insured.* I urged that this should be done. This incident needs careful consideration. It is demanding a great deal of Telepathy to ascribe the occurrence to that source.)

C: 'A man shows himself as one of your guides. He is Eastern. A tall man with a very calm serene face. He seems a man who never wants things to be hurried; he considers that there is a time for everything and that everything will happen at its appointed time.

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NOTE ON TWO SITTINGS WITH MR. VANGO

June 16th, and 17th, 1919

The Sitting of the 16th did not turn out a great success, though I found it afterwards to have been better than I thought at the time. Mr. Vango seemed himself to have the impression that it had not been successful, and asked me. I confirmed this, and he was much disappointed. He pressed me to come again the next day so that he could try again. I did so. The next day, the sitting was also a little disappointing, and Mr. Vango declined to accept any fee for either. On principle I disapprove of this. If a thing like mediumship is to be paid by results, at the option of the sitter, it is putting a premium on dishonesty (I am speaking generally, for I am absolutely convinced of Mr. Vango's complete integrity, and his attitude in my case shows it.) But in my opinion a perfect stranger has no right to come and use two or three hours of some one else's time in research of this kind, the results of which cannot be guaranteed,

and to pay nothing for it, the more so as the medium has probably no legal claim which he could enforce. I therefore eventually persuaded Mr. Vango to accept part of his fee, which he somewhat unwillingly did.

SECOND VANGO SITTING

June 16th, 1919

The medium was in trance. The Control warned me that she was very bad at judging ages, and that I must not pay great attention to that point, though she would give them as well as she could.

(1) C : There is a gentleman here aged about 60. Above the average height. Has a fairly good frame, but had lost flesh towards the end of his life. Dark, but not very dark. Good forehead, oval face, broad high forehead, eyes dark grey, nose straight but of medium size; has a brown moustache. Hair a little thin in the later part of his life, the colour dark brown with a little grey intermixed. He had failing health for a time before passing out, and became very weak. To get to him a long journey across water is necessary. (This is a very exact description, except the age, which is quite wrong, though at the time I did not place it. The person in question was not a relation, nor exactly a very intimate friend, but neverthe-

less a very cordial liking existed. I was closely associated with him for two years in certain work in a distant colony.

(2) C: 'JIMMY comes in uniform. Age 28 to 30, average height or little above, erect, holds himself well. Oval face, good features. Forehead well developed. Eyes light blue, clean shaven. Clear, open smiling face.'

This Jimmy has cropped up in altogether three sittings—two with Mr. Vango and one with Mrs. Brittain—besides the 'Jenny' who I suspect was the same person in the 'first Vango sitting, when merely the name (presumably heard clairaudiently) was given. I have a vague impression that a fellow officer of mine, killed in action, whose name was not James, was called 'Jimmy' as a nickname, but I have no means of verifying this before going to press.

(3) C: 'There is an elderly lady here, aged between 60 and 70, perhaps, but nearer 60.' Here followed an excellent description of my mother, who died at the age of 60. The name 'Mother' was also given. The following particulars were also given, along with other circumstances of her illness: "Internal pain in the left side, first low down. She suffered without being actually bed-ridden about $1\frac{1}{2}$ years before passing. I get the number Seven. She had an operation and then

survived awhile. For a time there was hope of recovery. There was a talk of a second operation which did not take place."

All these details are exactly correct, even to the contemplated second operation. I take the number Seven to refer to the name Sevenoaks, the place where she lived, though the control suggested that it might refer to the number of the family left behind. Lest the reader should think that I am jumping to a strained conclusion here, I should remind him that mediums over, and over again tell one that they often get some number or symbol given them, to indicate a name or some message, (*c.f.* the indication of a name by a bunch of blossom so named, as described by Mrs. Brittain's control previously.)

(4) C: 'Father is here. Did he possess a gold watch? Seems uneasy about this watch.' * * * *
(*c.f.* First Brittain sitting.)

(5) Next came an allusion to some lady who was living, and the number Three was given. It conveys nothing to me.

(6) C: 'There is something about two houses. One is finished with.' (See ante—First Vango Sitting.)

A question about tests elicited no reply, and the control ceased.

THE THIRD VANGO SITTING

June 17th, 1919

(1) C: 'There is an elderly lady here, age 70 to 73, small compact figure, round face, small features. She previously had dark hair which is now faded. Forehead lined. Eyes small and dark. Nose short and straight. Small mouth. Hair parted in centre and smoothed back. Energetic. Not long illness. She was much attached to you when alive. I draw the conclusion that it is your grandmother, but I am not given that as a name. She was taken ill suddenly—a short illness, and then gone. Is she on your 'mother's side?' I: 'Yes.'

Every item in the above description is entirely correct of my maternal grandmother, except the age, which, at her death, was 84; but she was very energetic and healthy at that age.

(2) C: 'I get an elderly gentleman, over 70, apparently over the average height. Not very erect. A broad frame not well covered with flesh. Oval face, broad high forehead, front hair gone.

Very little hair on the top of the head. Grey moustache and beard, fair colour. Walks slowly in the latter part of his life, using a stick as though he needed it. Perhaps there was some trouble in the right leg, but he was not actually lame. * I see him in the garden away from here---not London. He walks along a path. He feels unwell and sits on a seat. He is met by a lady who comes down the path to his assistance. He is very unwell; he walks back with the assistance of the lady after a little while.'

This description puzzles me. It is not entirely correct of my father and still less correct of my uncle, and I know no one else to whom I could say definitely that it applies. So far as I can ascertain, the description of the incident in the garden fits neither. There is another person to whom it might apply better than I am prepared to say that it does, because I do not remember sufficiently, as I saw him last about twenty-one years ago. There is in his case no possible means of verifying the garden incident. His sister and he lived alone.

(3) C: I get the name John given. It is no connection with the old gentleman. (There are two Johns of the family deceased, both having died in old age.)

(4) C: 'Boy of eight or nine comes, also no connection with the last.'

(Not identified.)

(5) C : I must return to the old gentleman. I get the number Seven. Did he leave seven children or a family of seven? Also the figure Three with some meaning. There was a sadness in his life. He has visited you in this way before. He refers to you as if you had been recently standing looking at two roads and wondering which you should take. He is satisfied that you have taken the right one.'

Nothing in this last makes the identity any clearer. The last sentence is of course meant symbolically and accurately represents a fact.

(6) C : 'There is a lady here. I should think not more than 26 to 28. Average height, and medium figure. Oval face, good features, and a fair complexion. Good forehead. The eyes are large and blue. The mouth is medium. She shows good teeth. A clear skin with a nice tinge of colour. The hair is loose in front with a wave in it, and is light brown in colour. She had internal trouble and an operation which she not long survived. She was not a close friend. She is not surprised to see you here ; she looks on it as natural. She knew something of this subject when she was alive. I get the two letters F, and S.'

This description I recognise perfectly, and it is right in every particular except the age, though I do not know whether she knew anything of this

subject.' The age is entirely wrong, but I may remark that this lady, especially at a little distance, looked very much younger than she really was. I remember being astounded when I heard that she had a grown-up son. The first and last letters of her name were F and S. I will call the name Farrist†, though that is not the real name.

(7) C: 'Do you know a George in the spirit world?' (I know three of that name who are no longer living.)

(8) C: 'There is a man here of from 28 to 30. He is of the average height or above. He carries himself well. He is of medium figure. He is on the dark side. He has an oval face, high forehead, eyes darkish, nose a little prominent, and has a moustache; otherwise he is clean-shaven. He had something to do with cycling. I am also shown an accident.' (Not identified. It is an incorrect description of the only person whom it at all suggests.)

SEANCE HELD BY J. J. VANGO

June 18th, 1919

At this séance, there were 17 persons present. In most cases from two to three descriptions were given to each sitter. The sitters were all strangers to me, and the impression they produced was that almost all of them were convinced 'Spiritualists,' rather than investigators from a scientific point of view. There were about 34 descriptions given, the medium passing to each sitter in turn. Out of these all but five or six were apparently at once recognized, and without difficulty. Many of the sitters were evidently not strangers to the medium, but only one or two seemed to know him at all well. There was a marked absence of any foolish giving away of information to the medium; perhaps he had cautioned them against it before I arrived which I was almost the last to do.

In several cases names or initials were given, and in all but one of such cases, the names and initials were identified.

My own case is interesting. Only one description

was given me. But almost the first words of the medium caused me to think that he was referring to a particular person. I was therefore, the whole time, trying to reconcile the description, which was distinctly incorrect, with this person, the only one who at the moment I thought could be concerned. Hence, though this case does not positively exclude Sub-conscious Telepathy, it does exclude Telepathy in respect of my conscious mind. Yet this case resembles the Griffiths case, in that there seemed to be one obvious reading of my conscious thought on the part of the control. An explanation by the Telepathy Theory necessitates, therefore, that the medium was sensing a sub-conscious thought which was, as it were, fighting its way through a *contrary conscious thought*, and that he was in fact sensing three thoughts : (a) A conscious thought which was recognized as incorrect and stated by him to be so. (b) and therefore my conscious incorrect thought about the identity of the person described ; (c) my correct sub-conscious knowledge of another person to whom the facts he gave applied.

The identity whom the description fitted most exactly, only occurred to me about half-an-hour afterwards, and even then, so little had I borne this person in mind, though I recalled his personality at last, I could not recall his name and was mistaken about his regiment : both these

things I had to look up in a book which I happened to possess, in which I knew they must occur. I have made these preliminary observations because this is a crucial matter; it is the very occasions when Telepathy does seem to have occurred that make us seem obliged to be very cautious in applying it as a complete explanation. It seems to show itself clearly on rare occasions, and then almost as if it said in words— '*This is how I work; don't be misled and charge me with actions which I show no signs of having committed.*'

The reader is advised to ponder these two cases very deliberately, and to re-read my explanatory remarks carefully after reading the evidence itself: it is emphatically a point for the 'jury.'

The description took place as follows.*

C: 'There is a man in uniform here; if you have known anyone in particular, I will describe him if you wish it, but most people know so many now-a-days, and so many come here, that I don't generally describe them.'

I: 'I have known one or two in particular; describe him by all means.' (At this point, I thought of a particular person who was not described, and who was not an *officer*.)

*Mr. Vango asked me for some object, and I handed him a ring which I have worn for many years, and which was originally given me by my father.

C: 'He is in the uniform of an officer.' (I at once thought of Lieut. X——† of my then regiment, who fell in action near me one day.)

The description which followed puzzled me, however, though one or two points about his death agreed with that of Lieut X——†.

'He was on the fair side.' My recollection was that Lieut. X—— was dark, but I am not sure now. 'He was a very jocular sort of man; he was always making jokes about things.' I was, and am, quite certain that this is absolutely wrong. Lieut. X—— was a singularly quiet, rather shy, reserved, almost inscrutable man. 'His age was about 30.' Lieut. X—— could not have been more than 22 at the most. Then followed details about his death. 'He died suddenly, and the end was quick.' This was true. 'The chief injury was to the head.' Lieut. X—— died of a body wound and was not hit in the head. 'You were not with him when he died.' Certainly, I was not, but I was thirty yards away, and should have rather called that being with him, unless he had been killed in some building or part of some trench separate from me, which was not the case. I was called and was there when he was carried away. I could not stay away—the more as he was not conscious—from my portion of the firing line in the middle of an advance in a sharp action, and I believe he died a

few minutes after I left. 'You were together a good deal for a time, but not just before his death.' I was not with him more than with other officers of the battalion, and less than with some, and this hardly described the circumstances. 'He shows me the number 3 above you.' This was incomprehensible. The medium suggested that this might mean three days or hours or weeks that I had been away from him before his death, but in such case it did not apply, and I could make nothing of it. 'He seems to hand you papers to sign; would he do that? I should not think he had much to do with papers.' This last seemed to me an unnecessary remark. How could any one judge by the appearance of an officer whether he would have much to do with papers? However, as I was Adjutant of his Battalion, he might have handed me papers to sign, but it would be more likely that they would have reached me through his company commander; that is the usual channel. 'You were over him; you were his superior. He was under you.' This again did not fit. It is true that I was his superior in rank (mine was that of captain) but I was neither his company nor his battalion commander, and as Adjutant I was not in the true sense of the words 'over him' or 'under me.' 'You did him some kindness: he indicates that you wrote something for him.' At

once I welcomed *in thought* the recollection that after his death I had written to his parents. The medium continued, however, 'This was not after he was killed; this was before his death—something to do with a kind of promotion for him.' (Note here what I said in the above preliminary remarks about this description.) Finally, the medium put his hand to his throat and said, 'I sense trouble *here*.' This also conveyed nothing to me.

For some time after, I sat puzzling over this description, till it suddenly occurred to me that I was entirely on the wrong tack. I recollected another officer who had been killed, to whom all these details applied exactly. I could not recall the name, but I knew where I could find it, and looked it up on returning home. It was Lieut. Y——†.

Lieut. Y — was 30 to 34 years old, I should say. He was fair. He was of a quite especially 'jocular' disposition, laughing and joking even about things that annoyed us both, and in the army their name is legion. He was, I believe, shot by a sniper when peeping over a rock or bank, and, if so, probably was hit in the head, though I cannot say that I remember this detail from what I heard. I only heard of his death a day or two afterwards. He was in a different battalion, and at the actual time of his death was about a mile

away from me. He and I were constantly together for a time, but were separated when I rejoined my battalion. He joined his later on.

The circumstances were these :—

I was for a few weeks in command of a *Depôt* at the Base (not in England, but far from there.) Lieut. Y----- was my second-in-command, and therefore in the exact sense of the word 'under me.' This was never true in the case of Lieut. X-----. Y----- did most of the clerical work in the *Depôt* office that was not done by the subordinate staff, and daily put before me papers to sign. Before leaving the *Depôt*, I wrote a strong recommendation to my superiors that Y----- should succeed me in command of 'the *Depôt*. I wrote very warmly of him and his work. This did not involve actual promotion in rank, and therefore the words 'a kind of promotion' exactly fit. When Y----- came to the *Depôt* and reported to me for duty, he had just been discharged from hospital, where he had been treated for laryngitis. He was very hoarse, and it was for this reason especially that he did so much office work, because he was not allowed to use his voice in drill-commands on parade. Finally, the number 3 was entirely significant; the *Depôt* was known as the 3rd Brigade *Depôt*.' He had not lived in England for years.

This was the only description given that evening,

but after Mr. Vango had passed on to the next sitter, he turned back to me, and again abruptly said ‘*Who is Jimmy?*’ Lieut. Y——’s name, by the way, was not Jimmy.

I should mention that I made no comments to the medium upon any part of the description.

This séance may, I think, rank as a test case as to the validity of the Telepathy Theory.

THE LEONARD SITTING

June 19th, 1919

This is by far the most important record in this volume. The portion of it which concerns the Book-test is dealt with in a separate chapter.

The sitting was anonymous. The appointment was made for me by Sir Oliver Lodge's secretary. I went, at the day and hour arranged, with an introduction worded as follows :

‘ Dear Mrs. Leonard :

This is the gentleman who has an appointment with you for 10.30 on June 19th,’ and was signed by Miss Walker.

In view of the extreme importance of this sitting I wrote later, after the verification of the Book-test, to Miss Walker. I said I was of course absolutely satisfied that she would not have communicated my name, or the only other fact that either she or Sir Oliver knew about me, namely my rank and regiment, to Mrs. Leonard, or, to either of the other two mediums, but that, in order to make the

chain of evidence complete in every part, I should be very grateful if she would send me a statement to that effect. I received the following letter from her in reply :

Dear Captain ———,

As I understand you may be publishing some striking accounts of sittings with Mrs. Brittain, ———*, and Mrs. Leonard, and as I appreciate the importance of a complete chain of evidence, I hereby assure you that I have not communicated your name or any details whatever about you to any one of these mediums. It would in any case have been impossible for me to give them any useful information, as we have never met, and I know nothing about you but your name, not even your actual place of residence in London?

Sir Oliver Lodge desires me to give you the same assurance on his behalf.

Yours faithfully,

(signed) N. WALKER
Secretary.

Mrs. Leonard purports to be controlled by a personality calling herself 'Feda,' who speaks with some kind of foreign accent.

A very curious and not usual feature of Mrs. Leonard's mediumship is that 'Feda' appears to conduct, along with her observations addressed to

*This is the medium whose name Sir Oliver Lodge desired should not be published.

†All letters to Sir Oliver Lodge and to Miss Walker were headed with the address of my Club, and their replies all came there. I do not however live there.

the Sitter, a kind of aside conversation apparently addressed to the Communicator whose messages she is transmitting. When so doing, she speaks in a different tone and looks sideways, as if to someone sitting close to her right side and a little below her. She does not appear to realise that she is conducting this conversation audibly—indeed it is not always easy to distinguish every word of it—because after one of these asides she usually repeats it in full and aloud to the sitter, apparently thinking that the latter has not heard it. She sometimes words it slightly differently in repetition. This makes the proceedings slower, but it has two great advantages. It enables the sitter to see something of her difficulties in interpretation and it often makes the intention and sense of the latter clearer. It is impossible to describe, moreover, the sense of realism produced in the purported manner of the transmission of the information; it is simply impossible to sit with Mrs. Leonard and to think that she is all the time indulging in stage patter. Such consummate acting was never seen on the stage or off it. No! Whatever the origin attributed by the most hardened sceptic to the phenomena, the absolute belief of this medium in its reality as mediumship is indisputable. I have had to do with an enormous and quite unusual number of human

beings for years, and I have a considerable practical as well as theoretical knowledge of human psychology, and frankly I refuse to entertain the idea.

So much for the medium herself. Now for a sitting the like of which, in a long experience of mediums, I never met before.

As the medium goes under control, faint fragmentary whispers are heard before "Fedá" appears to gain full possession and to speak clearly.

The following is a full record of the whole long sitting, as far as I was able, writing very fast, to record it. Not for the first time I regretted that I do not write shorthand. The whole rough draft was corrected by me the same day before returning to town (the sitting took place some distance from London) and was typed in full the next day. The corrections only took the form of sometimes filling in unimportant words that had been left out, as in order to keep pace with the very fluent control, I had to write as one writes telegrams. But no improvement of the record has been made in any way by me. Even now, I have left most of the sentences and phrases in their abbreviated form, rather than trust to memory to make them more continuous. The reader will therefore understand that this staccato brevity is not the real speech of the medium, which is fluent ordinary English

except where she seems to stumble over unfamiliar words.

I shall for convenience use the former letters, namely "I" and "C." All questions or remarks made by me are recorded in full, and I certify that no others of any description than those recorded were made by me. The "asides" which I mentioned above are placed in brackets. Asterisks denote as before any part of the record suppressed for personal reasons. Dots thus, indicate any sentence or phrase which I was unable to record. Daggers will be used as before for any initials or names that have for personal reasons been changed or suppressed. All matter between quotation marks consists of what passed at the sitting. Matter not so placed is my personal observations made now as I write.

* * * * *

C: 'Wait a minute, Lady comes . . . with gentleman. Wait a minute. Lady wants to get through.' Wants badly . . . Lady . . . old gentleman . . . young man . . . These preliminary whispers were hard to catch: I did not get them all. C: 'Good-morning!' I: 'Good-morning.' C: 'I am very glad to meet you. I: 'Thank you; I am very glad too.' C: 'I am glad to come and use my medium.' C: 'But *you* have power; you have it yourself;

you ought to get automatic writing. They have already tried. Lady has tried. She is a young-looking lady, oval shaped face, sudden passing out. She was not well some time before passing. She has brown hair, an oval face, a clear skin, a clear complexion, and a sweet nature—a very sweet nature.' This description, as far as it goes, describes my mother accurately.

C: 'There is an elderly gentleman and a young man (wait a minute, wait a minute, you *must* go slow). The young man is on the tall side, fairly strong build—or no, perhaps he is rather on the slim side'. . . . (wait a minute, go slow) the mouth not small (mouth not small, wait a minute) nose rather straight, nostrils wide open, not small nostrils, (not small, wait a minute) his chin is clear and smooth.' I have transcribed as I recorded, but I think the word was probably 'skin.'

C: 'He is healthy and full of life (wait a minute) eyebrows brown; they sweep out a little from the forehead.' Here the medium drew her finger straight from the root of the nose outwards implying rather straight eyebrows. C: 'The forehead not full, not prominent, but a good shape, well shaped at the temples (wait a minute) his hair is brown, and very short at the back and sides, and goes back away from the forehead; it's brushed back, but just sticks up a little on the head,

though brushed back smoothly. He passed out suddenly. A strange feeling in the head—uncomfortable numbness in the head. He seems to have fallen into an unconscious state—dizzy—stunned—(what did you say?) If not for the stunned feeling he might have felt pain. He didn't expect to pass out when he did; he thought he might have passed on another occasion, but he didn't think he would then: he might have expected to (wait a minute: I am telling him). When he passed over he very soon met a person who is also very interested in you. I recognize this description perfectly. It is most exact. A young man I knew very well was killed in France, by a shell, I believe, but I have no other details of his actual death except that it was sudden. The description recalls him unmistakably. (But see Appendix D.)

C, continuing description of the person whom the young man met: Not a young person but elderly, used to walk very straight, but stooped slightly towards the last. He had a beard round the chin and a moustache—both grey; the eyes a grey blue but faded in colour—fine eyes, not prominent, but deep-set eyebrows which shade the eyes a little (wait a minute) and fairly straight nose. The cheek-bones showed a little during the last days. Rather a fine intelligent face. The forehead broad, and the hair a little thin on top.

Grey hair at sides and back and not very short at sides and back. He has been to you very often, and he is always trying to help you in purely *earthly* things. He passed over with an affection of the chest; his breathing was bad some time before he passed. He seems to have had difficulty in breathing from the lower part of the lungs. He is very positive about things. He says that the tubes from chest to throat seemed stopped up. All this time, the medium kept giving short coughs as if trying to clear a slight impediment in the bronchial tubes. C: 'His breathing was difficult when he passed; he had a short bad illness. He ought to have known he would pass soon; his heart was not good. He builds up a large J between you and him.'

I was rather obtuse about this description. I was misled by two things. At first I thought the description was meant for my father, but the reference to throat and chest suggested my uncle, who, shortly before his death, had the operation of tracheotomy performed. But when I read the description to his son he showed me how very incorrect it would have been of my uncle. Indeed, before I suggested that at all, he interrupted the reading to say, 'That's Uncle Henry, of course,' (my father). I had also attached undue weight, I think, to the part about his having been guiding

me in purely earthly things, because the same was said some years ago by more than one medium about my uncle. Though my father had nothing wrong with his throat or lungs at the time of his death, he died of Angina Pectoris, and in its first attack he had a painful access of difficult breathing, having to gasp for breath. I am told that at the very last his breathing was quite quiet. The large J ought to have made the identity clear to me, as that is the initial of the name by which my mother was always known. I am very bad about remembering details of people's personal appearance, and at recognizing descriptions of them. I always notice their manner and idiosyncrasies more than their actual features. Hence my very vague recollection about my uncle, who was quite bald, and whose eyes were greenish in colour. When I saw photographs of both side by side the other day, I realized that the personal description was exact of my father and quite wrong of my uncle, though they have naturally points in common. My father's heart had been weak some time.

C: 'On the other side he is building up W. W is separate from J.' W is the initial of the name by which my uncle, my father's only brother was known. C: '(Wait a minute; I am telling him). He was rather fond of books, and he had some gift for writing. This is *very* strange. I think he

must have seen me before. He says he knows 'Feda' and has seen me before. You will get automatic writing very soon and very suddenly (wait a minute, now, wait a minute). You have the gift of writing in another sense, what you call a lit . . . lit . . . literary sense (wait a minute); it will never be automatic writing in the ordinary sense, more inspirational. You expect your hand to work like a machine by itself (wait a minute . . . er . . . wait a minute) I have to work a bit by impression here—he means you are so used to use your brain—your mind is so active, that they cannot use the hand. If you get a strong impression to write a word, do so, and then it will come. (What? They wanted to do a sort of scroll?) I don't know whether you ever felt an impression that your hand wanted to move in a sort of downward curve This gentleman—I feel he knew an enormous number of people when he was here. Not in the ordinary way as friends, but he was brought into contact with enormous lots of people—a good strong influence. He was interested in a public building, not a house, interested in the upkeep of the building; he had papers to examine and meetings to attend about it. It was earlier, before he passed out, that he was interested in the upkeep of this building. He was interested in a

place called B; he must have lived there (Are you *sure* it was a place, not a person?)

I should confess here, that as two or three mediums have told me that I have the power of automatic writing, I did once or twice as an experiment try whether anything of the kind would happen. I did not expect that it would and it did not. Not that I desire mediumistic powers—very much the contrary, but I confess that I should like to experience that kind of thing once for the sake of analysing my own sensations in its occurrence. My father spent part of his day for years in intimate connection with a large charitable Institution, and took the chief part in raising its funds. After this work became too much for him, he joined its committee of management and remained most keenly interested in it. Until this moment, I have been puzzled about the place called B. I had at first connected it with my uncle, who lived at Blackheath. Now, at the actual moment of writing, I wonder how I can have overlooked my father's fondness for Bournemouth. When I was in England for a short time in 1917, we very nearly went there together, and in several subsequent letters he referred with regret to our not having been able (owing to my military duties) to do so. He was particularly anxious to show me the place.

C: 'He has built up a large ———†, a person's name.' I think I know who is referred to; though there is also an ———† deceased, I think this would refer to a living person, a great friend of both his and mine. C: ' (Wait a minute; I can't get that; you must go very slowly; you are interested . . . h'm, h'm, . . .) I don't know what this means quite; something makes it easier to come back in a way, but when he comes, such a choky feeling. Had it a little while before passing. (*What do you say about the journey?* . All right, I'll tell him.) He is very positive; he knows his own mind very positively; he says he was thinking about a journey before passing; his thoughts were on another place.' My father died at a watering place where he was with friends on a short holiday. He was on the point of returning when he was taken ill.

C: 'There is a young man with him a great deal. He is building up a large G. He knows you. He really wants rather to get through to a lady more than to you. The lady is his mother. He almost seems disappointed that she is not here to-day, but you don't know her, I think. He passed over near a place called L (yes?) Yes, in the war. There was some uncertainty about it, as if the news had not been sent very quickly.' I think I place this reference. I do not know where exactly the

death took place, except that it was in Gallipoli. I once saw the mother a few minutes in England years ago. The son, however, wrote to me occasionally for years. His name was George.

C: 'But I must go back to the old gentleman. It is very important. (Wait a minute, anniversary he is very interested in) There is an anniversary you are very interested in. I've told him this is June, because you know spirits often seem wrong about time. He recognizes that it must be very close. It's connected with him. Very very important. This anniversary is now. He does not expect you to remember it now, but you will be able to find out. I feel a change, as if a great change took place, one of the most important things in his life. Something in October also, but it is the other he wants looked up!' I easily place the October one. This was the month in which my father died. But the June one puzzles me, if it is June. It is true that at the end of June 1917 I left his home finally on being ordered to my regiment, but that seems hardly to fit the communication exactly.

No detailed comments will be made on the following book-test; as already said, this is dealt with in a separate chapter. I will only say here that I had said no word to Mrs. Leonard about any

Test or about Telepathy or about desiring to exclude it.

C: 'He is very anxious about a test. (Wait a minute, wait a minute; you'll have to go very slowly so that he knows just where the books are—wait a minute.) I have to give you shelves, with books, running towards a window. (Wait a minute, not—don't quite understand—) Not in the middle of the wall, but more towards the end. More than one shelf. He's pretending to count the shelves; (wait a minute).• He thinks of a table—the top of a table—close to the bookshelves. He says that while he was looking, he caught sight of a round bright object to one side, very light in colour—reflects light. These things are not important (the objects, you mean?) but they are *landmarks* so that you'll be sure of the place where the books are. It's a place that you know, a room he sees you in. I'll just ask him (. . . .) No good. A window, books running towards a window. It's a test. You'll be in the room again very soon. He asks whether you have written it down. I: 'Yes, it's all written down.'

C: 'Second shelf up, counting up.' At this point I asked a very ill-advised question. It was really intended as a kind of test question, but I ought not for any reason at all to have put a leading question. Knowing that they could not possibly

be my own books, I foolishly asked, for that very reason, 'Are they my books?' The result serves me right; let it be a warning to any reader who may be engaging in psychic research.

C: 'He says are they his books? Are they his books? . . . They are your books. You are not always in this room, but it is a room you are often in.' I: 'My books are all stored away. I do not know how or even exactly where.' C: 'No, he is shaking his head. He says you will be in the room soon. He calls them your books because you have a right to go there. Seem to have a table for writing on near them.' I: 'I have no idea where the books are.' C: 'Three days. He seems to say you will be there in three days. He is taking you there. He is trying to think out something—something not Telepathy—where Telepathy can not come in.'

I: 'That's just what I want.'

C: ' (You gave me the second shelf up?) The second shelf up. (Second shelf up; count from the right?) Count from the right. The third book from the right on the second shelf. (Page what? Can't see that number; two, seven—that means twenty-seven). Page twenty-seven on the upper part of the page' (wait a minute, on the upper part of the page, what is it?) A message from him to you referring to the possibility of communication.

Certain words there point to the fact that there can be communication, and he thought it was very (*what's that?*) thought it was very apt; (apt to do what?) No, no, he shakes his head—very *apt*. He wants you to take this personal message: this book, especially about this particular page, seems to deal with different countries, not just England, (wait a minute, different countries) and also on the preceding page to the one indicated, twenty-seven, twenty-seven—seems to suggest to him a comparison (what does *that* mean?) a comparison of *Time*; it speaks of one time, and then jumps to a quite different time, as if comparing one time with a much later one. Now just at the beginning of the book, the same book, at the opening, (go slowly) an allusion to a *place*—a place that you will know he himself would be specially interested in. (Do you mean when here? Yes?) Yes, when in earth life; (now just wait a minute, is that *all* you want to give?) Yes, that's all for the Book-test. (Wait a minute I'll tell him that in a minute.) I feel he is going to lead you to it.

I: 'I still have not the remotest idea where the books *are*.'

C: 'He says "Leave it to me! Leave it to me!" He says, "I have been trying to think out what will disprove Telepathy in this instance."'

Let the reader, before commencing the chapter

on the Book-test, read the above passage over carefully two or three times. Every single word in it is of the highest importance in view of what subsequently happened. Let him remember that in the first Brittain sitting I especially asked for a test that would absolutely exclude Telepathy. Let me say here that I had discussed with my father in 1917 the question of post-mortem tests—I mean tests arranged while alive in order to be carried out after death—and had told him of the arrangements I myself had made with my brother, in the form of an encoded message of which I alone knew the key-word which would enable it to be deciphered, and which I hoped to try and communicate should I be killed in the War. My father discussed with me whether a letter-lock could be so used. Let the reader bear in mind what I have said, and what, as he will see presently, my cousin states, about my father's exact memory for the position of books. All his life he had been in the habit of retaining quotations and passages from books in his mind. If at the dinner table any question of dispute arose about some subject in which a reference would settle the argument, he would say—‘If you *really* want to know, get Had—Int.’ He actually knew by heart the syllables printed on the backs of all the 20 or 30 volumes of an old edition of the Encyclopædia

Britannica which he had in his shelves, and 'Had-Int' meant that this was a subject which would be found in the volume dealing with words between those syllables!

However, to resume the record.

C: 'Why is he interested in the East? Not America—the East, and then somewhat south. He has showed a letter. He is pretending to hand a letter to you. He knows a letter has been written which you have not yet received. He sensed it. It seems to come from the East. Not England. It's *been* written, because, you know, spirits do not really know the future, though they sometimes think they do.'

Ten days after this sitting I received a letter from my brother written from Omsk, where he is on active service with his battalion with Koltchak's army. There was at any rate no Telepathy from any department of *my* mind in this case!

C: ' (What do you say? You don't want him to go away?) But he speaks as if he expects you to go away. (. . . .) Oh! He was anxious to have this sitting because he had a motive at the back of his mind for wanting this sitting especially before you went away—before it was too late, as it were.'

('What do you say? Wait a minute, wait a minute; say that again; why are you giving him

paper with lines on it?) He is giving you paper with lines on it. There is some writing, but that is not important. Long straight lines. There are lines drawn about figures and numbers—a sort of plan—the writing is not the important part—some kind of plan. Not to do with *going* away, but something you will see when you get away. As if you would be studying this sort of diagram, you thinking it out. It will be sent or given to you, given by some one else. About the journey gives me the feeling of going to one place and then going on further.. Not just calling—stopping a bit, and then going on further. Not just calling—stopping a bit, and then going on further. Journey not ended at once. (Little delay?) There will be a little delay. Whatever the date fixed, there will be a little delay. You must interpret this yourself. I: ‘I quite understand.’ C: ‘He seems to think you might have gone before now—earlier. I had to get this by impression; it is only fair to him to say so.’ (See Appendix D.)

As to the plan or diagram, time alone can show to what it refers. As to the journey itself, every detail is correct so far. I have been contemplating a long journey, and it might have taken place earlier; at one time I had reason to think it would. At the actual time of the sitting, I intended starting about three weeks later. Circumstances

over which I had no control, shipping difficulties in fact, have delayed this journey twice, but at that time a date had actually been fixed.

There is often a good deal of misunderstanding about this kind of prediction. People ask how it can reasonably be possible that discarnate spirits should be able to prophesy the future: that is the ordinary sceptic's point of view. Others conclude that they can do so and then lose themselves in a maze of metaphysical speculation as to the opposing theories of Predestination and Free-will, the while attributing omniscience to the Departed. Neither point of view is to my mind necessary, because they seem to be founded upon a wrong assumption. So far as I have experience, good mediums never really claim that their controls prophesy the unknown future (see 'Feda's' remark about the letter from the East) but they do claim that they may be able to predict certain events before the sitter himself knows them—not, that is, before they are knowable.

Let me give an illustration. Suppose that you or I were to have, unknown to a person to whom we were speaking, access to the confidential intentions of, say, some government department which had not yet declared but had nevertheless decided upon a certain unexpected policy or action. If we told this person that in three months

time a certain cabinet minister would resign, and that an unexpected important Bill would be submitted to Parliament, and this subsequently occurred, that person might suppose us to be possessed of the powers of a prophet; yet the real explanation, as we have seen, is perfectly natural. Granted, then, that discarnate spirits can up to a certain point sense the knowledge and intentions of living persons upon whose conduct our immediate future may depend—and the whole Spirit theory is based largely upon that contention—no omniscience is required, and no predestined future is involved, by their being able to supply us with certain information, before we should obtain it in the ordinary course. The very fact that these predictions are not by any means always verified, supports this view; for our information of the government's intentions, used just now as an illustration, might be perfectly correct, and yet those intentions might subsequently be completely changed. • I admit that the view which I have advanced does not cover all the cases of which I have heard, but it covers all that I have myself experienced. I suspect, therefore, that the power of prophesying the unknown often claimed by mediums, or at least on their behalf by some spiritualists, and which so offends the common-sense of the outsider, is really claimed through a

misinterpretation of facts that nevertheless very likely really occur.

C: 'An important—(wait a minute; what?) It is very important. Much more important than any journey you have yet made. It leads to bigger things than you have touched before. Have you had a sort of feeling as if you had got up to a sort of Corner of life? As if you did not know what was coming next? Rather a mysterious condition, as if you had your face to a wall, and you can't see over it, and yet you know there is something important the other side? Something like walking blindly?' I: 'Yes, I know what he refers to.' C: 'That has been done purposely. Much bigger things are opening before you than ever before. You have had to do with a good many people and conditions lately which have passed out of your life again. Do you know the saying "Ships that pass in the night?"' I: 'Yes, that is quite correct.'

Of course it is. I have been four years in the Army! As to the rest, I can only hope that it is all true!

C: 'All that is coming to an end. Things are calmer now. Everything is altering. You have been developing mentally and psychically. You are often much misunderstood; people that like you often misunderstand you in a stupid way.

You are not like the rest of the family. A different train of thought. You are one of the family and yet not one of them.' True '(What did you say about *committee*? Sort of meeting?) He did not quite like the word Board; he hesitated between Board and Committee. Board? Committee? It's something you'll be connected with.' I: 'At the end of the journey?' 'Yes, very soon after. It is very important. Much will be decided by this meeting. (What has Bank to do with it?) An arrangement with a Bank is important. (I've given it to him *just* as you said it.)'

* * * * *

Certain passages occurred here which it would be quite out of the question to publish. They may turn out to be evidential in the future, but for present purposes nothing is lost by their omission.

A good many of these predictions, and others that occur presently, can only be verified later on after my 'journey.' If this book should require further editions, I may be able to add some interesting evidence, and that is the reason why I am printing some of these communications which can only become evidential if they mature; to do so will make the case stronger if they do.

In the case that follows, I have been obliged to change the actual name used. It is an uncommon one, and I have no right to use it in print without the consent of the person concerned. Moreover,

it would not be possible to obtain permission in time for press, even if I were at all disposed to do so. I have therefore substituted one that enables me to give a close parallel imitation of the medium's attempts to give the name.

C: 'Do you know Penil? Pen-nil? Pennils? Word like that but not that; a *P* not a *B*. You are going to hear about this name soon. Pă, Pă, Pě, Per, No! Pen—Nile, Pennile. Penner? Pennow? I can't quite get it. I get a longer sound. A longer name.'

I: 'Try to give the syllables separately.'

C: 'Pě, Pě, Pě, Pennill. I: 'One at a time.

C: 'This is the first, I think: Pă or Pě. Not a name I have heard before. Pen-nile; Pen-nilia, Perroni, Perronia? No, no, he says I am getting off it. Pen-nile-er. He says he will drop that for the moment: I will try and get it later. Very, very unusual word.'

I: 'What about this person?' C: ('He says what about this person?') There is something happening immediately that will bring you face to face with that name.' I: 'As a sort of test?'

C: 'Yes. Then you will say, "I see now why he

mentioned it." You'll know something. It will remind you very much of that name.'

About a fortnight after the sitting, I received a letter from a person I will call 'Pénhail.' I may have received perhaps six letters from the person in question during the last four years, certainly not more. I had no reason whatever to expect one at this time. Furthermore, a friend of mine landed in this country, having come from the same place, and mentioned certain news about this person. I need hardly say that as soon as the first attempts were made to give the name, I recognized who was meant. But on principle I never give away a name at a sitting. Telepathy scarcely helped here.

C: 'He is interested in all your affairs. About time something came to a head. (Wait a bit. Rather a hilly place? More open than here?) I get that it is rather a hilly place, more open than here. More space. Not so bottled up, not so crushed up. Hills all round like mounds—not one but a good many. It's a place called B. (Is it B?) B?' I: 'Sure it's a B?' C: 'Stroke down, then loop then——' Here the medium drew with her finger quite slowly and most distinctly an R. As she did so, she said, 'Oh, oh! not a B, not a B.'

I: 'But that is an R.' C: 'Yes, it is an R. I always mix R and B. It seems as if it is a place

you will be connected with at the end of your journey.'

All this is quite correct. This place does begin with R. It is hilly open country, and not only are there hills all round but there are a number of high mounds, artificially made, also.

* * * * *

C: ' (A place called M?) A place called M. He thinks you'll be connected with it. Not very important but interesting. (. . . . Well, he'll have to put this down. Assassination? Somebody murdered there?) He keeps saying Assassination. He does not call it murder. Assassination, that's the word he uses.' I: 'Something recent?' C: 'Yes, quite recent. He seems a little uncertain whether you may not have heard already, but any way you may hear before you go. Assassination of a man. Public man, sort of official or public man. Quite quite lately.'

It is not clear to me whether this refers to the place called R, to the place called M (which, by the way, I do not identify) or just to the country where these places are. Anyway, some weeks have gone by and I have so far heard nothing. There has been time for letters to have reached me from that part of the world. (See Appendix D.)

C: 'What *does* this mean? He is stooping down and marking long lines on the ground.' The



"I get that it is rather a hilly place, more open than here. More space. Not so bottled up, not so crushed up. Hills all round like mounds—not one, but a good many."

"The above is a characteristic view." *Author.*

Control seemed to expect a reply, so I said, 'I wonder whether it is symbolical, or whether it is like marking out ground.' 'Like measuring. Something to do with the paper he showed me before. As to your question whether it was meant symbolically, he meant it literally, but he can't ignore the fact that things will be on new lines too. (What are the little trucks for?) He keeps showing me a lot of little trucks coming up and being unloaded and going away again. They are funny little trucks, not like the railway trucks you see here.' I: 'I understand.' C: ' (What do you say? Digging?) He shows me digging—not a little, but a lot. Crowds of men digging. Something on a very big scale. When this happens—(wait a minute; it will cost something to be transferred? I'll explain it in a minute.) I get a feeling that all this is being done—this place a little later is to be made important—a sort of headquarters rather than some other place.'

I more or less understand what is being talked about here, from what I have heard from time to time. It would be too complicated a business to explain it in this volume. However, the little trucks are a common sight about there, where there are mines. (See Frontispiece.)

C: 'I want to tell you about a lady. Only medium height and build, rather pale face, a little

fallen in at the cheeks and under the chin, mouth rather pale, small chin, nicely shaped, straight nose, blue eyes hair brown but turned a little grey. I feel she shows me her hair as it was a few years before passing, and that it got greyer afterwards. It is not done loose over the ears, but done rather closely in front and past the ears, and up from the neck, and plainly coiled. Sweet, rather delicate face. She was not well for a good while before passing. Very sweet—very, very good. There was internal weakness and pain. She had it longer than she knew. Her disposition was not to worry and fuss others with her physical health, so she kept going longer than others would. Then her heart got weak—not heart disease, only the movements got exhausted. When she passed, it was all rather quick, but it was led up to.’

* * * * *

‘Do you know who E is?’ I: ‘I know who it might be.’ C: ‘She builds up an M very close.’

The juxtaposition of these two letters makes the identity of the person in question quite clear to me. Until the second, I was in some doubt.

C: ‘Some one here whose name is A.’ I: ‘Can he or she give the other initial?’ C: ‘I don’t see it yet. Interested in *him*, yes, him. Do you know any one connected with Scotland? Yes, Scotland, not the north of England. It is worth recording.

Some connection with the family back a good while.'

The description is correct of my mother. My godfather was a Scotchman, and his name began with A. He would naturally be interested in me.

C: ('When young man passed he passed as a baby?') She says there is a young man here who passed as a baby. He is a most beautiful glorious spirit. He has grown up on that plane. She links her arm in his. . . . Rather tall and slight. He tried to communicate through B.' I: 'Quite right.'

C: 'He wants to tell you that he is teaching a great deal on the other side--what he calls spiritual laws applying the divine principle. That's his work, he says. And he is not just doing it over there for the sake of those who have passed over, but he is organising bands of spirits to get it through to the earth-plane.'

As to this description--which I have had in previous years to somewhat the same effect, see First Vango Sitting. The reference to communication through B refers, I think, to a private medium who did automatic writing for me on two or three occasions. At the moment, I thought it was Mrs. Brittain, but it could not be. The circumstances of this were not such as to enable me to include the scripts in this volume, because the conditions were not fully evidential. Nevertheless the allusions

by 'Feda' which follow are interesting. In one of these scripts was a message which I could not understand referring to a person whom I will call Z——†. As there were two persons of that name living, I asked at the time whether it were the elder or the younger Z, and was told it was the younger. The message was still more incomprehensible. The medium's name began with B.

C: ' (Who is Z——†. Z——? Z——? You spoke of Z—— before?) Tried to speak about Z—— before—through a medium. Tried to speak of the *older* Z.' I: 'At the time, when I asked, I was told it was the *younger* Z——.' C: 'No, the *older* Z——. The old gentleman comes, and he is interested in this, too. It was given to you.' I: 'It was not automatic writing through me.' C: 'No, through *to* you.'

There are interesting points about this incident. In the first place, when this medium B—— was doing the writing, it was supposed to be from my father that the messages were coming; now the implication is that the actual control was getting the messages from my father through my brother—in other words that there were two intermediaries, besides the medium herself, between the communicator and me, for the medium had her own control.

Moreover this correction of the answer to my question on the former occasion seems very diffi-

cult to account for by any sort of Telepathy, the more so as the message was not comprehensible to me about either Z——. But see also the second Brittain sitting. There is a reference to the same subject again.

* * * * *

C: 'Oh, dear! I am losing my power. I shan't be able to do much more.'

I: 'What about that other test I asked for about the article that was missing?' (See First Vango and First Brittain Sittings.)

C: ' (Why a box? Something that is in a box?) It makes a noise when you move it.'

Here, the medium moved her right hand three or four times smartly up and down her left sleeve, making a sharp rubbing noise, and stopping each time at the top and bottom. Let the reader who is in the habit of using an Auto-strop Razor perform the action I have described, as the medium did—smart rubs, with momentary pauses at each end—and see what the sound reminds him of.

C: ' (Something makes a little noise? The difficulty is, where is the box). This box (wait a minute; are you sure?) would be put inside another thing making a noise like shutting up with a bang or clang. There were (oh dear! there is some uncertainty about two places) Some one wanted to take it away from the box where it was

put (now was it taken to a place . . . ?)' It was taken to a place of safety. Not in the place it was first put in. Moved, and taken to another place, and this is the place where I get the clang. A thing with a door—not a drawer—more like a safe. But not a safe. They are as it were exaggerating, to give the idea. The box exists. Not lost. Not really lost.'

I: 'Might be stolen?' C: 'Might be, but . . . Moved to some other place.' I: 'Can you get town, district, country, place?' C: 'Not like London. Going away from London: (Place near water? Why place near water?) At the same time not a sea-place. More the feeling as if there were a large river. Any way, not the sea.'

I: 'Try for the name of the place: that would be better.'

C: 'They shake their heads. I can't see anything but the box they want to find.'

I: 'Wooden? Metal? Big? Little?'

C: 'Dark, shiny. Does not seem to have the sound of wood. A small metal box.'

At this point I began to think that we were at cross-purposes. I was enquiring about the bigger receptacle into which the nickel box containing the razor had been put.

I: 'But I mean the bigger box in which the little one was put.'

C: 'Oh! About that height.' The medium indicated something about the height of an ordinary table, or rather less. C: 'And rather broad. No, can't get more. I saw for a minute the idea of the place. I seem to see a room, bare-looking. Walls not papered. Rough plaster or something. Very, very bare-looking. Rather a dark room. Not very light. Just outside the door some steps. Steps close to the door. Up, up, up. Don't quite understand up, up, up. Place seems quiet. No movement. Place is not much used. Unused. Slightly damp feeling. It's gone—gone. That lady wants to send her love. The others say—they are going to look after you. Good bye.' I: 'Good-bye; thank you very much.'

After the first Brittain sitting, I forbore from making any search for the missing article in case further information should come on this occasion. I have now searched in the place that seemed to me to be indicated, and have found no trace of it. I thought of another place, but it is in London, and moreover I have been assured that it is not there. At date of writing this (August 13th) nothing has been seen of it. In the place where I looked, there are two receptacles more or less answering the descriptions given by the two mediums. The trouble is that everything has been moved since my father's death, so that my test,

though it would be most important, is perhaps an impossible one. If the razor should turn up later, it will be interesting to see how its resting place compares with the information given.

About the sitting as a whole I will make no further comment, as the book-test eclipses all else in importance, except to urge the reader to compare the cross-references made to communications through other mediums, and to bear in mind what Miss Dallas says, in her introduction, about Purpose, and also to turn again to what I said in the Chapter on the Spirit Theory upon circumstantial evidence.

THE SECOND BRITTAIN SITTING

July 8th, 1919

This sitting was anonymous. I arranged it myself by going as before and fixing it with Mr. Britain; I gave the same initials as before.

* * * * *

The sitting began with a long allegorical description which I think I need not reproduce. There is nothing evidential in it, and some of it is rather personal.

The medium on this occasion did not go into a trance. I shall therefore use M before her observations.

M: 'Do you know anyone named Eric?' I did not, and said so. M: 'He seems to have been killed flying. I get a name—surname—beginning with K. Is the name Keeler? Make a note of it. I also get the name——†'

I knew someone who had a name closely resembling the above, and his initial was E, but I am almost sure his name was not Eric. I never heard whether he joined the Flying Corps. This is the

second person 'killed flying' that this medium has mentioned. The second name I recognise; she gave it before.

M: 'I seem to get flashes of conversation.' The medium added that she did not know what ~~was~~ the matter with them all to-day. They seemed so excited about something, as if they were very pleased and merry. Perhaps the reader can supply the clue by noticing the dates in the next chapter on the Book-test.

M: 'Is that ring you wear,' (pointing to the diamond one referred to ^{once} before) 'one that belonged to your mother? She shows it on her finger.' It is, and I said so.

A fair description of my mother followed, and also a description of a dog. 'Rather a big dog, like a spaniel or retriever, with big brown eyes and a face nearly black.' The dog walked along the garden and she seemed to tell it to go to its master. (The dog has not been identified.)

M: 'She has a soldier man with her. He treats you in a chaffing way, as if he thought you too serious. You seem to have a temperament rather reserved and shy, as if you were given to listening a great deal and saying very little--you seem to hear all and say nothing. He is a little taller than you and a bit broader. He is very energetic and active. Very muscular and wiry, but with very

little flesh—very thin, but muscles finely developed. Seems like a young officer. When he passed over, he was in a higher rank than when gazetted. He is the sort of man who would push on by his own ability. He was a great disciplinarian when discipline was necessary, but at other times he was jolly and easy with the boys.' I asked here whether she meant his soldiers when she said 'the boys,' and the reply was in the affirmative. 'There is a 'Jimmy' here, but I do not know whether it is he.'

The reader will have, perhaps, noticed a curious thing about this name Jimmy. On only one occasion has he been described, and the name has been given now three if not four times. This suggests a distinct determination to be recognized if possible.

M: 'There is a young midshipman. He was in training for sub. What does that mean?' I replied that it doubtless meant for the rank of sub-lieutenant. M: 'I think he was torpedoed; the people who loved him thought for some time that he might turn up.'

M: 'There is some special work for you to do. That officer says, "You are marked down for that, and you have got to do it; see?"' He says this in a joking sort of way, as if meaning that it is no use your trying to get out of it. They mean you to

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do it. You've got to. I do not know what it is. The soldier says "There is more in life than living, and there is more in death than dying," "

Till the closing incident of the sitting I thought I had placed this officer. I do not place the midshipman at all.

M. 'I am getting a slight Irish suggestion with you. Are you Irish at all?' I have remote Irish ancestry on one side, and said so.

M. 'There is some one named Willie here.' I know who, I think.

M: 'I get an impression of going to another country. You've been abroad somewhere--India or Australia; anyway, it is some country where it is very hot at Christmas time--where Christmas is in summer. I see you spending Christmas away somewhere, and I see a sort of picnic. Did your mother pass away when you were out there? You seem to have a splendid time, living in a hot sun and bitten all over with mosquitos; you are wearing some white thing and light trousers.'

All these details are perfectly correct. They refer to a time before the War. I habitually spent Christmas Day sailing on a bay, and landing on an island infested with moquitos. I wore when sailing a white jersey and grey flannel trousers. I was there when my mother died.

M: 'Do you know any one named---? It is

odd: this seems to be a lady's name. There is some lady named Edith that passed away sadly. I also get the name Frank.'

The name which I have not given is of a living lady, and would ordinarily be supposed to be a man's name. The second name I do not know. The third is the name of the brother who died in infancy.

M: 'Your father says the ring on your finger was his. He loved a pretty garden, but was not much of a gardener,' (A description of my father followed. What was said about the garden is strictly true.) 'You are not like him; you are like your mother.' (Correct.) 'Was that ring given him by someone named Joseph? He touches it and says "That ring's older than you, my boy." The ring was my father's and was given me by him. I do not know whence he had it.

M: 'There is somebody connected with India here. I get the names Charlie, and —† and —† and •—†. I do not know to whom the first name applies; it might be one of two or three. The second may also be of two or three, the third is my own, and the fourth that of a brother. * * * I get Frederick—†. He wants to give you a message. This is something very personal . . . The message was quite understood. I also know who Frederick is.

M: 'Some one says "Sarah, you will have to be going." Have you any old miniatures—not very small?'

A very curious thing happened about this name Sarah. It will be remembered that in the first Britain sitting, the name Sarah was given, and immediately after it, as if the two names belonged to the same person, the name Anne: I took them at the time as being so meant. But I never heard the name Sarah in connection with my family. Two or three weeks ago, some time after this sitting, an old clock belonging to the family came into my possession. This clock was one of my mother's earliest childish recollections. When I received the clock, I found that there was something wrong with the striking action. I took it to the makers, a firm still existing, and, when there, I unlocked the back of it for the shopman. On opening the door at the back, I saw written very faintly on its inner side, in faded ink, and in an old-fashioned feminine hand, the name Sarah. I was naturally very much astonished, and I asked my brother for a copy of a sort of family tree that our solicitors had just made in connection with the settlement of the estate of my father. I found in one family, on my mother's side, two aunts of hers named Sarah and Anne.

Is such an occurrence as this to be ascribed to Telepathy?

M: 'You are in better health than you were. Things are better. You seem as if you had been run down and 'fed up' and miserable. Everything is better now. Your father says something about you having a long holiday. Are you having a holiday now?' I answered that I was. The above is quite accurate. Through fever and other causes, I have been very run down since leaving the army, and have had fits of nervous depression. My health has now improved considerably. I have been able to take six months holiday before returning to my previous occupation.

The medium said something which I have failed to record about automatic writing. This caused me to say that I had had a message from my father which I did not understand. The medium said 'Your father says it was all wrong, and he was not satisfied himself.' This is in agreement with what I was told through Mrs. Leonard.

I asked whether any further information could be given about the officer referred to earlier in the sitting. The following was the verbatim answer:

M: 'He says "How old's your mother?" I can't make this out. You would not expect him to say that. You seem to give him an answer in four figures—a telephone number. Something to do

with a lodge—a house. But connected with this telephone number. It's a big number. What a funny thing that is, isn't it?'

'Yes, to the ordinary reader it is incomprehensible; it sounds nonsensical. But ask any Freemason whether it is nonsensical. It is not a revelation of any masonic secret to mention this remarkable incident. And moreover my answer, whether sensed telepathically or not, would be in four figures, and like a telephone number. It would be (only I am substituting another number) such an answer as '1985, E.C.' But the trouble is that this makes my previous idea of the identity of the officer quite out of the question. He was never a Freemason, nor, when I saw him last, years ago, was I myself. Moreover, I can think of no officer whom I have known to whom it would apply, unless it be some one whose death I have not heard of. The incident is at present inexplicable to me. Time alone, and arrival at my intended destination may clear it up. ●

Now which of the forms of the Telepathy Theory may be considered to account for this incident?

THE BOOK TEST

We now come to the consideration of certain evidence of such a crucial nature that even the most important facts yet recorded almost seem to sink into insignificance beside it. Nevertheless, we must guard against letting our minds be influenced by that feeling; those incidents are every whit as important as they would have been if this special evidence had not been forthcoming. But though, as I have suggested in reference to them, they sometimes strain the Telepathy Theory almost to breaking point, still there may be people who are not entirely satisfied that they do any more than that, who think that they may stop at that exact point, and can not be confidently said to overpass it. It may be held that however difficult and even extravagant it may seem to explain these incidents in particular, and even the main bulk of the facts recorded in general, by the Telepathy Theory, it is just possible to do so. The highest improbability stops short of positive disproof.

But we have now to consider a piece of evidence

that stands by itself. We have to ask ourselves whether it does not go beyond the breaking point, whether it does not amount to a final and positive disproof of the Telepathy and of every other explanation, excepting One, which has been advanced, and which, consistently with sanity, it is possible to advance.

I recognized at once that these facts were so important that I must neglect no possible precaution in order to make the chain of evidence complete in every link, and one that would satisfy others.

Before proceeding to the evidence itself, let me briefly rehearse the main facts of this part of the case.

With a medium living at a quiet little country village, 30 miles from London, I, a mere sojourner in England, who has lived away from that country practically continuously for fifteen years, make an appointment. I make it through a third person who lives over 100 miles away, whom I have never met, and who does not know my address. This person does not communicate my name—the only thing she does know—to the medium, and she makes a formal statement to that effect (see letter from Miss Walker at the beginning of the account of the Leonard sitting.)

I arrive at the medium's house, a complete

stranger in a place where I have never been before. I am one of dozens who do so every month. I have asked through another medium for a test which will entirely exclude Telepathy, and of this I say nothing to this medium. This other medium also does not know my address.

The medium (or the control—it is immaterial to the facts which terms we use) represents the person of whom this test has been asked, and who died long before my visit, as giving me a message which he says is intended to disprove Telepathy in this instance.

The message refers me to certain bookshelves, the whereabouts of which I am completely ignorant, and indicates their identity only by describing the furniture near them and by saying that I am often there, shall be there soon, and have a right to go there.

I am told that in a certain book in these shelves, only indicated, but quite precisely indicated, by its position in the shelves, I shall find four distinct and separate references, which are most precisely described :—

(1) On a named page, a passage of a particular nature which is described, even the whereabouts on the page being given :

(2) On another named page, a comparison of

THE BOOK TEST

time consisting in a sudden jump from one time to a much later one.

(3) A general treatment of different countries, not just England, by the book, and the occurrence of this especially about the two pages previously named.

(4) The mentioning at the opening part of the book of a place in which I shall know the communicator had been particularly interested.

I inform two persons of this test being given to me, and they make formal statements that I have done so (see presently) before I discover the bookshelves indicated.

If I subsequently find myself in a room exactly answering in every respect the description given, if I go to these shelves and take out the book indicated, and I learn that no one in the house has read the book, and if I find in it ultimately every one of the four references which have been described, to what conclusion ought I to come?

The 'jury' of the readers of this volume will have first to determine whether these conditions have been satisfied. They will then have to ask themselves the following questions:—

(a) Can this information have been known to the medium already?

(b) Can it have been obtained by her reading of any conscious or sub-conscious thought or informa-

tion in my mind or in that of any other living person?

(c) Then from what source did the information emanate?

Their responsibility is a serious one, for should questions (a) and (b) be answered in the negative, question (c) becomes for all practical purposes the following final question.

Does this evidence afford proof that the spirits of the Departed continue to have a conscious existence, and that they both can and do communicate in this particular manner with us who remain behind?

Examine it at every step. Do not be content with mere cursory perusal. Give every fair chance to both theories and test them by the facts. You will then be able to feel that you have not arrived lightly at your ultimate conclusion, whatever it may be.

This is a matter far outweighing in real importance any scientific research into Physics or Chemistry, any invention for the mere material benefit or convenience of mankind. It concerns something greater than our physical needs; it touches closely the whole significance of our life, and it affects our religious beliefs, which are, or ought to be, the mainsprings of our every action and thought.

Let me therefore appeal to the reader with all the earnestness at my command that he make no avoidable mistake in connection with it. Let me urge him——

To examine this evidence carefully, and minutely ;

To view it with neither unwholesome emotionalism nor illogical antagonism ;

To judge it with absolute impartiality, as a thing by itself, with a mind divorced from all prejudice, all traditional dogma, all preconception, all questions of private interest, as he would judge any new problem in Physics—say, for example, whether almost infinite potential energy be stored in a cubic centimetre of marble.

Finally, to face with absolute honesty the conclusion to which the facts, and nothing but the facts, lead him, remembering that we have one and all responsibility for our expressed views, that the public opinion of England is made up of the private opinions of so many million individuals, of so many intelligent creatures using as it was meant to be used the inestimable privilege of reason by which God has distinguished them from the brute creation. The power of reason was not an unconditional gift; it was a trust which we are morally bound to employ in drawing the life-giving water

—crystal-clear and undefiled—from His inexhaustible well of Eternal Truth.

Let him view these things from the standpoint of Science at its best—humble, reverent, and undogmatic; reason without emotion; caution without obstinacy; courage without precipitance; the intellectual honesty born of the conviction that each new discovery is a new revelation of Him who is Knowledge, that the perception of any law of Nature is the perception of the Will of Him who created Nature. Every phenomenon that occurs in the realms of Nature is the result of Natural Law, and cannot therefore be other than the divine Will. Natural Law is but another name for Divine Law, and the Laws of God cannot be contrary to the Will of God.

In this spirit I have tried to approach this subject myself; in this spirit I not only ask but I confidently expect the reader to approach it.

For convenience, I will now reproduce the essentials of the Book Test as given in the Leonard Sitting. I omit all asides and unimportant remarks, and most repetitions.

‘He is anxious about a Test.’

‘I have to give you shelves, with books, running towards a window.’

‘Not in the middle of the wall, but more towards the end. More than one shelf.’

‘He thinks of a table, the top of a table, close to the Book-shelves.’

‘He says that while he was looking, he caught sight of a round bright object to one side, very light in colour; reflects light.

‘Seem to have a table for writing on near them.’*

‘These things . . . are landmarks so that you’ll be sure of the place where the books are.’

‘It’s a place that you know, a room he sees you in.’

‘You’ll be in the room again very soon.’

‘Second shelf up, counting up.’

‘They are your books. You are not always in this room, but it is a room you are often in.’

‘You’ll be in the room soon.’

‘He calls them your books because you have a right to go there.’

‘Three days. He seems to say you will be there in three days.’

‘He is trying to think out something—something not Telepathy—where Telepathy can not come in.’

‘The second shelf up. Count from the right.

*This is put out of its original place for the sake of convenience.

The third book from the right on the second shelf.'

'Page twenty-seven, on the upper part of the page. A message from him to you referring to the possibility of communication. Certain words there point to the fact that there can be communication, and he thought it was very apt.'

'This book, especially about this particular page, seems to deal with different countries, not just England.'

' . . . also on the preceding page to the one indicated (twenty-seven) seems to suggest to him a comparison of time; it speaks of one time, and then jumps to a quite different time, as if comparing one time with a much later one.'

' . . . Just at the beginning of the book, the same book, at the opening, an allusion to a place-- a place that you will know he himself would be specially interested in.'

'I have been trying to think out what will disprove Telepathy in this instance.'

* * * * * * *

A great difficulty in verifying this Test is the fact that no name of a house or of the person owning the books was given. This however, has the great advantage that Telepathy from my mind, even as to the whereabouts of the books, is precluded.

Relevant to the question of time (only), it is

necessary to give my intended and my actual movements immediately after the test was received.

The sitting was on Thursday, June 19th. I had intended leaving London on Saturday the 21st., and thereafter shaping my programme according to the time which I should find at my disposal. The plan was to stop a night either at Canterbury or at Hastings, and possibly another at Sevenoaks, calling, if I had time, at my cousin's house at Croydon. If I had stopped at Hastings and at Sevenoaks only, or at Canterbury and Sevenoaks only, or at Canterbury and Hastings only, I should have arrived, if I went there at all, at Croydon on Monday the 23rd., the fourth day after the sitting. I was travelling on a motor-cycle, visiting my aunt and cousin at Hastings, and taking photographs at places *en route*, hence the uncertainty.

Actually, something I heard on the 20th caused me to change my plans and to leave on Monday the 23rd, cutting out Canterbury. Ultimately I spent two nights at Hastings and one at Sevenoaks, arriving at my cousin's at Croydon on the afternoon of Thursday the 26th. At Sevenoaks I had a long talk with Mrs. Pearce Clark, who is somewhat sceptical about such things, on the matter of the Book Test.

On Sunday the 22nd. I happened to be in another house, the only one, in fact, that had occurred to me as being possible. In this house were no less than four rooms with books on a side-wall; but in no case did the other details apply in full, while the round bright object did not occur in any of them. However, I looked at all the books in any position, even partly identifiable, as being in any sense the third book from the right on the second shelf, and in no one of them was there any reference that bore the remotest resemblance to the references given to me. I had felt so confident that this house, if any, must be the one meant, although it did not to my mind quite 'square' with one or two things that had been said, that I was by now thoroughly disgusted at the apparent failure of such a detailed and interesting test. I cannot say that the house of my cousin at Croydon did not occur to me, but I could not recollect that there were any books in those of his rooms which I usually frequented when in that house. The only room in which I distinctly recalled the presence of books was one which I had only entered once, and my recollection was that they were on the wall opposite the window. (So they are).

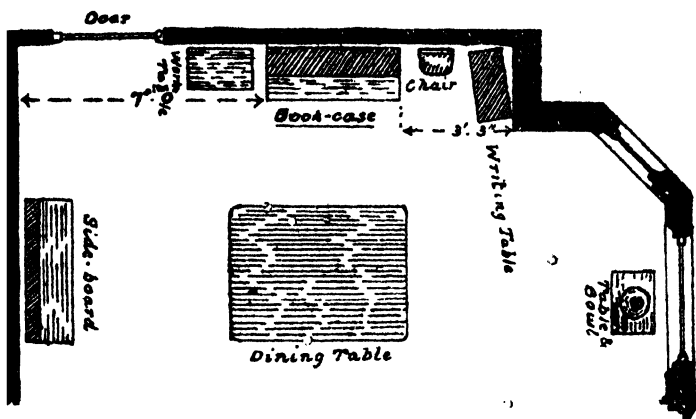
On Thursday, June 26th, I called at my cousin's house. On entering the dining-room, I at once

noticed that there was along the side-wall a book-case which I had forgotten. I then observed a small work-table on the immediate left of the book-case, and a little writing bureau, of the kind in which the front opens downward on hinges, and forms a horizontal table for writing upon, near it on its right. In the window, to the right as one faces the book-shelves, was a small table in the bay. On this table was a *large round light blue glazed bowl*, which reflected the light from the window. The book-case is not in the centre of the wall, and is in fact just double the distance from the wall at the back of the room that it is from the window-wall. The book-case is a glass-fronted one, the shelves all in one length without partitions. There was therefore no difficulty in regard to which shelf could be meant. I had never particularly noticed, and certainly never opened, the book-case before. I append a plan of the room, so that the reader can judge for himself of the positions of the furniture.

The reader should compare these things, point by point, with the extracts from the Test just given; the same applies to what follows.

It is well to advert to one other point at this stage. I cannot be said to be very often in this room; 'a room you have been in not infrequently' would have been a more correct way of describing

the circumstances. But the words 'you have a right to be there' have a certain appositeness which up to that moment I had not realized. When my father's death took place I was on active service. My cousin's wife wrote to me in the field



Plan of part of room at Croydon (reproduced at scale of about $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet to 1 inch.)

on two or three separate occasions telling me that I was to look upon their house as a home whenever I liked on my return. When I did return, this cordial 'freedom of the city' was renewed by both of them, and they begged me to come whenever I could and felt inclined, and to stop as long as I liked, to put up there if I could not get comfortable accommodation in town, and so on. For the expression 'They are your books' I have my

own foolishness to thank, as twice explained already.

I naturally at once opened the book-case and looked for the third book from the right on the second shelf. It was partly hidden behind the door of the book-case, and its title was not clearly visible from outside. I took it out.

It is a book which I have never seen or heard of before, entitled *Punishment and Reformation*, by Dr. F. H. Wines.*

On page 27, near the end of the first line, begins the following passage :—

What concerns us now is to note the original supernatural sanction for the authority vested in the father of a family or a tribal chieftain. The primitive form of religious belief, though it was not, and could not be formulated, must have been really pantheistic. The superstitious savage sees in every movement of natural objects the visible manifestation of the power of an indwelling spirit. Spirits move the sun, the moon, and the stars across the sky; spirits make the leaves and the grass to wave, and the water to ripple in the wind; spirits make the flame and the smoke to rise, and the rain to fall; spirits are in the growing plants, in the rushing rivers, in the flash of lightning, and

* London. Swan Sonnenschein & Co. 1895.

the roar of thunder. *What more natural, then, than that they should suppose that spirits suggested the thoughts of men?'**

There are some ten lines more after this on the same page.

How far the passage may be considered 'apt,' as suggesting the possibility of communication, is a matter of opinion. The last sentence is the most important one from this point of view. Perhaps, if my father had read such a passage aloud to me in his lifetime, I might have asked him flippantly whether it was the allusion to superstition that constituted its special aptness! But often one's idea of the aptness of a passage depends more on the *thoughts which it suggests to us*, than on what it actually says.

The point is, is this passage sufficiently relevant to the subject to satisfy the conditions of the test as given? One must not forget what would be the extreme difficulty of finding a passage in a book chosen for the reasons for which this book purports to have been chosen, that suited the subject. But let us proceed to the other references.

On page 26, the previous page, occur the following words:

'The histories of the families of Abraham, Isaac

*The italics are mine, not those of the author of the book.

and Jacob are not unlike instances which might be cited from other nations of antiquity. * * * So Lot separated from Abraham. So, after the death of Jacob, the children of Israel grouped themselves according to the nearness of their blood-relationship by tribes. *A similar organisation was that of the Scottish nation by clans.* (Again the italics are mine.)

Could there be a more striking instance of speaking of one time and then jumping to a quite different time, as if comparing one time with a much later one? Think! 'The children of Israel—the Scottish Clans!

The book was said 'to deal, especially about this particular page' (page 27) 'with other countries, not just England.'

On page 26 are mentioned Rome and the Roman Law. On page 27, allusion is made to Greece. On page 28, Greece and Rome occur. On page 29, Assyria, Nineveh, and Persia are spoken of. But the book discusses its title as regards many other countries. The following names have been copied from its index:—

Sweden, The Netherlands, Turkey, Switzerland, Norway, Assyria, New Caledonia, Van Diemen's Land, Madagascar, Jamaica, New Jersey, The Barbadoes, Sierra Leone, New South Wales, Salamanca, Boston, Moscow, Oldenburg, Vienna,

Manich, Michigan, Paris, Philadelphia, Orleans, Babylon, Naples, Amsterdam, and others.

It will, I imagine, scarcely be disputed that it deals 'with other countries, not just England!'

It will be remembered that at this time I rather densely thought the communication was from my uncle, and not from my father. I copied the above passages, but I could find no mention in the opening part of a place that I should know that my uncle would be interested in. Switzerland was the only country I had ever known my uncle to express any interest in. My cousin was not at home, and I had not the complete record with me, but only rough notes of essentials. Moreover, I was in a hurry to reach town as I had an engagement near Harrow for 4.30 p.m. So I replaced the book and said nothing till I should be able to go again when my cousin should be at home. One thing and another got in the way, and it was not till July 14th that we were able to fix a day when I could come and he would be at home. On that day, therefore, I again went to Croydon. As soon as we were alone, I took him to the book-case, pointed out the position of 'Punishment and Reformation,' and asked him to note it. He was somewhat amused and perplexed at my action. I then asked him whether he had read the book, and he said he had not. He has since informed me that

he got the book some years ago, thinking that he might want to refer to it in connection with some literary work which he was contemplating, but in fact had never had occasion to do so. He also told me that the book had been in that position for a long time.

We then sat down. I told him about my visit to Mrs. Leonard, and I read him part of the record of the sitting. As soon as I read the description of the communicator, he said, 'That's Uncle Henry, of course.' I said, 'Oh! do you think so?' and told him I had thought it was his own father. He very soon convinced me of my misinterpretation of the description. When I had read the references to the book in the test, I fetched the book from the shelf and showed him the passages. He was naturally much astonished.

In the new light of my conversion to the belief that it was really my father who had been supposed to communicate, I then searched the opening part of the book for the reference to 'a place I should know he himself would be specially interested in.'

On the second page of the Preface, page viii, I found the following phrase, the title of a book--

'Sul governo e sulla riforma delle carceri in Italia.'

. (On the government and on the reform of the prisons in Italy.)

My father was very greatly attached to Italy, where he had been in his younger days, and we had debated whether, on my return from active service, it would be possible for us to go to Venice together before I left Europe again. He spoke Italian very well, and sang in that language, and he had a quite proper pride in his knowledge of it. A sentence in Italian would at any time have arrested his attention.

Since receiving from my cousin the statement which he has made on the subject, it occurred to me to write and ask him whether any of his family had read the book ‘Punishment and Reformation.’ His reply was ‘No, we have none of us read ‘“Punishment and Reformation.”’

In order to make the chain of evidence as complete as possible, I append statements showing that I mentioned the test to others before the 26th of June, when I first verified it, and also a statement from my cousin of its formal verification in his presence.

(A)

STATEMENT BY MR. FRANK HOWGRAVE.

On Monday, June 28rd, 1919, my cousin, Capt. ——— visited me at Hastings. While there, he related to me the substance of what he called a Book-test, which he said he had received some days previously from a medium with whom he told me he had had an anonymous interview by arrangement with Sir Oliver Lodge.

He told me that he had no idea where the book was to be found, and that its position was described as being the third book from the right on the second shelf of some bookshelves whose whereabouts were only indicated by the position of various articles of furniture. He said that he had been in at least one house that might have been the one indicated, but that the room was not clearly recognizable as being any in that house, and that in none of the rooms there was there a book that contained any reference whatever such as he had been given.

I mentioned this matter to the wife of my brother Walter a little while ago, when she told

me that the book and the references had since been discovered at my brother's home in Croydon, but I have not seen my cousin since his visit or corresponded with him on any subject until he wrote and asked me to make this statement.

My cousin told me that among the references which he had been told he would find in the book was a passage referring to the possibility of communication from spirits.

He said that he thought from the description of the communicator of the message, that it must refer to my father (his uncle) and asked me whether I knew of any anniversaries in my father's life which occurred either in June or October. I said that my father's birthday was in October. He further questioned me as to any public building in which my father was interested when living, as regards its upkeep. The only suggestion which I could make was that the Institute of Chartered Accountants, of which my father had been secretary, had a building of its own, but that it did not require any particular upkeep. I remember that he told me that he was said to have a right to go to the house where the books were.

July 24th, 1919. (Signed) FRANK HOWGRAVE.

(B)

STATEMENT BY MRS. PEARCE-CLARK.

July 30th, 1919

On Wednesday June 25th, my friend Captain ——— visited me on his motor-cycle and stopped the night at my house in Sevenoaks. He left next day, telling me that he hoped to call on his cousin at Croydon on his way to London.

While he was with me, he told me of an interview which he had had some days before with a medium, in which this medium had given him a message which he thought was supposed to come from his uncle, Mr. William Howgrave, who died some years ago. 'In this message, he said, were various references to a certain book. The position of the book was only indicated by a description of the furniture of some room which was not named but into which he had been told that he 'had a right to go.' He said that the only house which 'had so far occurred to him as possibly being meant was one to which he scarcely felt the words used applied. Moreover, he told me that he had looked at all the books whose position corresponded with

the details given by the medium, in that house, and in none of them was there any reference which could possibly be considered to be one given him.

He said, reading from some notes he had with him, that the book was said to be the third book from the right on the second shelf counting upwards in some shelves which 'ran towards a window,' and that on a certain page there was, he was told, a reference to the possibility of communication, and on the previous page a comparison of time, and that other countries were dealt with in this book, which also contained, near the beginning, a reference to some place the communicator would be interested in.

At the same time he told me various other things which had occurred in the same interview.

He told me that he had been much disappointed at not finding the reference in any book in the house mentioned already, and he could not think what room could be meant.

He now tells me that the book and all the references have been found at the house of his cousin at Croydon, and asks me to make this statement as to his visit to me on the 25th of June.

• (Signed) LYLIE PEARCE CLARK.

(C)

STATEMENT BY MR. WALTER HOWGRAVE

Fellow of the Royal Economic Society, Chairman of the
Borough of Croydon (East Ward) Conservative and
Unionist Association, Hon. Treasurer of the 'Duty
and Discipline Movement.'

18th July, 1910

On Friday, the 14th inst., my cousin—Captain —, came to see me. He read to me aloud part of a typed record of a sitting with Mrs. Leonard, an appointment with whom was made anonymously. When he reached the passage referring to the position of the books in the room, he rose from his chair and footed the distance between the book case and the inner wall and that between it and the outer wall. He called my attention to the fact that there were eight feet on the one side and only four on the other. Close to the inner side there stands a small work-table; on the other side is a writing desk in the corner with a chair between it and the bookcase. This furniture has always been in these positions. On another table by the window there is a bright blue enamelled bowl,

which, in the sun, reflects a strong light, which can be seen in the mirror in the side-board which faces the window at the opposite end of the room. The description of the room in fact accords very accurately. My cousin, continuing to read from the record, directed me to the book, 'Punishment and Reformation,' which was, I believe, always in the same position as so accurately described in the record. To my amazement, the passages referred to as on page 27 and the previous page were as described in the record. Moreover, there are a large number of countries mentioned in the book, and, on the second page of the Preface, p. viii, the following title of a book is quoted: '*Sul governo e sulla riforma delle carceri in Italia*,' di Martino Bettrani-Scalia. I had never read this book, 'Punishment and Reformation,' and knew nothing whatever of its contents beyond the title.

I recognised very clearly indeed the description of the communicator given at the sitting as being that of my uncle, my father's brother and my cousin's father. Strangely enough, he, my cousin, had thought that the description was that of my father instead of his own, but I convinced him that he was mistaken. For one thing, my father's head was completely bald on the top with the exception of three hairs of which he was jocularly proud.

This discovery of the identity of the communicator shed fresh light for my cousin upon several previously puzzling points in the record. The book was purchased long since my father's death; he had never seen this house and was not particularly interested in 'Italia.' My uncle, on the other hand, died since the book was purchased and frequently visited us in this house when the book would have been, in all probability, exactly as described; he was in the habit of taking books from the case and looking at them, and was scrupulously careful in replacing them in the exact position from which he took them; and he was intensely interested in Italy. He possessed a large library of his own at his house in Sevenoaks, and frequently astonished me by describing the exact position of any book to which he wished me to refer, and he was wonderful in remembering and quoting passages from them and other works.

After my cousin had finished reading the extracts from his record of the sitting with Mrs. Leonard, he told me that, when he came here on the 26th of June last, he first discovered that he was in the room described, having previously sought it without success, and that he then referred to the book, but said nothing about the matter to my wife (I was not at home), as he wished to confirm his impression by reference to

the record which he had not with him at the time.*

On his asking me by letter to make a statement of the above facts for publication as a confirmation of his own account, I pointed out in my reply, that in the eyes of suspicious critics this last fact vitiated any evidence I could give, because they might argue that he first acquainted himself with the facts, then introduced them into his record of the sitting and afterwards came to me for confirmation of the record. I pointed out that he might be unable to disprove such a charge, although I myself absolutely believed his statement and knew him to be utterly incapable of perpetrating such a trick. I learn to-day, from my wife, who has just returned from a visit to Hastings, however, that he communicated the contents of his record to my brother in Hastings, *before he came here on the 26th instant, before he knew where the room was that he was seeking, and before he knew of the existence of the book or of any of its contents.*

I must add that later in the evening of the 14th instant I seemed to recall a vivid impression that I had seen my uncle reading the book in a certain easy chair which is now placed in a different

*I had only some rough notes with me of a few essential points. (Author.)

position from that which it then occupied, and that he asked me where I got the book from or why I had bought it—I failed to remember clearly which. My impression is that he asked me, in his usually quiet, almost suppressed tone, ‘Where on earth did you get this, Walter?’

We are none of us by any means* convinced Spiritualists; and I have never been inclined to go to any medium or séance; my mental attitude towards the subject is one of extreme caution. In the present example, however, although there are one or two apparent inaccuracies in the ‘communication,’ any telepathic explanation is in my opinion definitely proved to be impossible, and the possibility of fraud or self-deception appears to be altogether excluded by the facts.’

(Signed) WALTER HOWGRAVE.

My cousin’s statement is worth very careful perusal, for it throws a light on several points, and brings them into relief. I feel that the reader, as well as myself, is indebted to him for the careful and thorough way in which he has treated the matter.

‘If his récollection of my father having read the book and asked him about it is correct, it raises the interesting question whether this test was deliberately prepared before his death. That my

father should do such a thing is by no means unlikely, because shortly before I left England to go on active service we discussed the question of tests arranged before death, and his written letter about communicating 'through a medium named Vango if possible,' distinctly favours the idea that he had some such purpose in his mind, because Telepathy was always in his mind as a possible explanation of these phenomena. He said it would be a very good thing if the question could be finally settled.

Spiritualists tell us that discarnate spirits have, or can obtain if they wish, a kind of psychic counterpart of any book that exists 'on the earth-plane.' I am not prepared to say that that is unlikely to be the case, but I never heard any very satisfactory evidence that it is the case. The idea, which I am inclined to think worth consideration, of the whole thing being prearranged, would make such an explanation unnecessary.

"Then why," it will perhaps be said, "Mrs. Leonard and not Mr. Vango?" There may be more than one reason. To begin with, the letter in which Mr. Vango was mentioned was written before I returned to England on sick leave before resuming active service, and I mentioned to my father that I had had an interview (not recorded in this volume) with that medium, and possibly my

father gathered that Mr. Vango knew my name. He made no allusion to any intention to communicate if he could. More probably it is a question of certain mediums giving certain kinds of tests most easily and most satisfactorily. Other Book tests though seldom as strong, I think, have been given through Mrs. Leonard, and there has been in the past a suggestion that particular intelligences were co-operating in her particular case, and with one or two other suitable mediums, to arrange and superintend that particular form of evidential communication. At any rate, there are the facts.

I should be sorry to think that the most suspicious critic would seriously make such a shocking suggestion as that which my cousin imagined possible, and I feel pretty confident that the whole tone of this book, and Miss Dallas's introduction, would negative such an idea even if any one was coarse-minded enough to entertain it. However, the two statements preceding that of my cousin Walter effectually block that avenue of escape from the facts. But I think that the type of person—if such there be—who would suspect without evidence his fellow man of such a heartless and unscrupulous, as well as motiveless hoax as that, at a time when such a deception would be so peculiarly cruel, would be well-advised to have nothing to do with psychic research, for only

mediæval bigotry or some obscure self-interest could explain such a state of mind.

This concludes the evidence that I have been able to collect. I prefer to make no further comment upon it. It is a matter for each individual to consider for himself. I have put forward the general nature of the theories which have been advanced to account for these phenomena, and I have put forward the evidence that has come in my personal way. The only thing which I do not wish, and do not intend, to put forward is any expression of opinion as to what conclusion I think the reader ought to come. He can best do that for himself. Let him answer one by one the four 'questions for the jury' in the opening part of this chapter.

I cannot more fitly end this chapter than by means of the following statement from Mr. Arthur Howgrave, the son of my cousin Walter, which he sent me on the 24th of August.

(D)

STATEMENT BY MR. ARTHUR HOWGRAVE

During a sitting at a circle of the Croydon Spiritualists on Wednesday 23rd inst., Mrs. Scholey*, who is gifted with clairaudience, asked me if my name was Walter. On my denying this, she said that I was to give a message to 'Walter.' I was to tell him that he was to pay attention to the things that he had heard. The communicator wished him to know that he was with him in his mirth and when he was down.

(Signed), Arthur A. Howgrave.

*I never heard of this medium before. My cousin Walter thinks it improbable that she should know his name, and impossible that she should have heard of the Book-test, while there is absolutely nothing else of any special interest that he has heard lately to which such a message could possibly refer.

The Jury of Readers have now had before them an accurate record of the evidence. My comments upon it have been as impartial as I know how to make them. I have said all that I conscientiously could on both sides in respect of the two principal claimants to have originated these communications. If I have seemed on the whole to lean towards one of them in so doing, I have only faithfully indicated the Truth as it appears to me.

I will finally direct their special attention to Appendices C and D.

I then leave in their hands, as men of honour and conscience,

THE VERDICT—

APPENDIX A

The following Classification of Mediumistic Phenomena and some allied Phenomena is put forward as a suggestion. It is not intended to be a classification of *all* *supernormal* phenomena, only of those which either appear to be mediumistic or may on occasion be mistaken for such. One is always disinclined to coin new words, but it is better to do so than to use existing ones which are misleading. This must be the Author's excuse for such new words as appear below.

Pseudo- psychic .	Apparent but not genuine phenomena produced by	Information normally acquired. Conjuring or other fraudulent production of imitated materializations, sounds, lights, etc. Simulated automatisms.
	Intusfunction Processes.	Dual personality, and other phenomena arising purely out of the Subliminal Personality of the medium.
Endo- psychic .	Extrinsic Processes.	Telepathy from an Incarnate Source. Phenomena due to Hypnotic Suggestion.

		Movements of Furniture.
		Appearances of Lights, etc.
		Audible Sounds.
	Transfuntive Processes.	Direct Voice.
		Apports.
		Writing on Sealed Slates, etc.
		Spirit-photography.
		Messages by Tilting Table, Planchette, and Raps, etc.
Necro-psychic.	Retrofuntive Processes.	{ Permaterial Cognition (called Psychometry).
	Intusfuntive Processes.	{ Clairaudience.
		{ Clairvoyance.
	Intrative Processes.	Involuntary Writing (called Automatic Writing).
		Trance Control.

MEANING OF TERMS EMPLOYED IN THE FOREGOING CLASSIFICATION

Pseudo-psychic. Of occurrences which simulate or are imitations of Supernormal Psychic Phenomena, but which on examination are attributed to normal causes.

Endopsychic. Of Phenomena traceable to processes presumed to have generated or originated within the medium's own mind, as distinguished from those which seem due to the agency of a discarnate spirit.

Necropsychic. Of Phenomena which seem to be traceable to processes originated by the agency of discarnate spirits of the Dead or "Departed."

Intusfuntive. Of processes held to be functioning within the mind of the medium, whether or not they seem to be assisted by discarnate spirits.

Transfuntive. Of processes in which the medium seems to be intermediary for the conduct of supernormal energy exerted upon matter.

Retro-funtive. Of processes in which some supernormal force

or effluence, deemed to be inherent in a material object, influences the inner mind of a medium and thereby places him in rapport with discarnate or incarnate minds; as distinguished from transfunctionive, in which the energy is deemed to be transmitted through the medium to matter.⁴

Intratiōē. Of processes which seem to be due to invasion or possession of the body or some part of the body of a medium by a discarnate intelligence.

Extrinsic. Of processes which seem traceable to external sources, usually incarnate minds, but which are super-normal.

Permaterial Cognition. The faculty or act of becoming cognizant of facts in the life of a living or deceased person or of describing spirits etc., apparently by means of the assistance of a material object which has been in close contact with the living body of such person. Another term expressing what is known as "Psychometry." •

APPENDIX B

SUGGESTED POST-MORTEM TESTS

In order to provide further evidence in respect of the possibility of Communication with the Departed, it is strongly urged that tests should be prepared which should be left in the hands of the survivors with the idea that the person who has died should if possible communicate through a medium or by any other means messages or information which shall be capable of comparison with the test package, if any, or be otherwise verified.

If the test consist of a package of any description, it should be first sealed in one wrapper, and then again sealed in a second wrapper in the presence of a witness, and the date of sealing marked on it and signed by both. A statement of the facts should be drawn up and signed by both. It can then either be given into the charge of the survivor who is expected to be able to test the message to be received by him, or, better still, deposited with some third person, or in a box with Will or other confidential documents, which will enable it to reach such survivor on the death of

the 'Agent.' In verifying the test, the survivor should communicate to a witness the message he has received, which he should have reduced to writing, and have dated. He should then in the presence of this witness open the packet, and the message should be verified by both. A statement should then be drawn up by each separately, signed, and dated.

If the test does not consist of a package, *e.g.*, a 'Book-test,' the proposed Agent should tell the expected survivor* nothing of the nature of the test upon which he has decided, only informing him that he has devised a test. Similar steps to the above should be taken in respect of verification.

A medium should if possible be chosen in all cases who has been known to give tests of this nature or as near as may be. No living person should be told anything whatever of the essentials of the test.

The test should consist in something which is not known by any person except the Agent alone, and every precaution should be taken to exclude the possibility of even the most extended kind of Telepathy.

*A person should of course be chosen to receive the message who is likely to survive him who gives it: he is hereinafter, for brevity, called the 'survivor.'

Test 1. BOOK TEST. The Agent selects some bookshelves, in which the books have long remained undisturbed and are likely so to remain. Shelves which are catalogued are best. They must be such as the Percipient will easily have access to, and of which it will be easy to indicate the whereabouts. He should choose some inconspicuous book which contains some striking passage or one which refers to some subject which he knows the survivor will be interested in. He should endeavour to satisfy himself that the survivor has neither read or is likely to read such book. It is best to select at least three passages or references in the same book. There is no harm in copying the passages and pages in order to memorize them so long as no one sees the notes and they are destroyed as soon as sees the notes and they are destroyed as soon as memorized. The passages, pages, title, author, and exact position of the book should then be so thoroughly memorized by the Agent that he would be unlikely to forget any detail. He then informs the survivor that he hopes, if able, to communicate a test, but without giving any hint of its nature.

Test 2. CIPHER TEST. A short message, easily remembered, should be written out and memorized. It should then be enciphered by means of

the Playfair Cipher (see Active Service Pocket Book, published by Gale and Polden.) The Cipher is quite easy to work. A key word should be chosen which it would be easy to indicate if a medium were unable to give the word itself. Thus a word out of a family motto, one which was the title of a picture in the survivor's house, etc. could be chosen. Avoid family names. The message having been enciphered, seal it up as described above. The Agent must of course immediately destroy the Cradle used for enciphering. He will then try to communicate (a) the contents of the message. (b) the key word by which it can be deciphered. Avoid a key-word which the Survivor is likely to guess.

Test 3. OBJECT TEST. This is a risky test because it would have to be so carefully devised for fear it should be prematurely discovered by accident. Some very small object is hidden in some obscure place where it would be certain to escape observation. A hollow weight to the pendulum of a clock, might, for instance, be the kind of place chosen, or a hole beneath a particular tree growing alone in some well defined place. In this hiding place is secreted some object easy to describe or indicate as well as to name, yet unmistakable for any other object, something having a

distinctive character. The agent tells no one of the nature of the test.

Test 4. LETTER-LOCK TEST. A letter-lock is procured which can be set to open with any word, say of five or six letters, chosen by the owner. The Agent sets this lock to open with a word which he chooses and communicates to no one. He then encloses a short written message, and say a couple of objects similar to those in the last test, places them in a small secure box, locks the box, and mixes up the letters of the lock. He will then try to communicate (a) the written message, (b) the objects, (c) the word which will unlock the box.

The advantage of all these tests except No. 3 is that if they should fail the first time they may succeed on a future occasion without the test being spoiled.

It is as well to warn two or three people interested that any of these tests is contemplated, so that if it fails with one survivor or the latter dies himself, or is unable to get an interview with a medium, an endeavour could be made to give it to one of the other survivors. This also would possibly enable a cross-correspondence to be carried out—that is the communication through Medium A to Survivor X of one part of a message or test, and through Medium B to Survivor Y of another portion, as happened in the case of the

believed Myers messages with Mrs. Verrall and another.

Some agreement should be made with the survivors as to their making the best use of the test if successful.

APPENDIX C

TABULATED STATEMENTS OF RESULTS OBTAINED IN FOREGOING RECORDS

In order to give the reader a comprehensive view of the evidence just recorded, the following summaries have been compiled.

It was naturally a matter of some difficulty to do this with perfect accuracy. A good many cases leave doubt as to how they should best be classified. I have gone on the general principle of when in doubt putting any given incident in the lower category, by which I mean the lower category as regards its value as a support of the Spirit Explanation; for I was especially anxious to avoid the least exaggeration of the evidence for communication.

I have proceeded on the following principles. A name or initial is placed under the heading for names, whether of a place or of a person (the former are very few in any case.) A personal description, by which I mean a description of the age, appearance, etc., of a person mentioned, has

been put in the column for descriptions. All other references to such a person, *e.g.*, circumstances of illness, place of residence, habits, etc., have been put under the general head of 'Other Tests, References, and Details.' All clearly incorrect information has been put in the column for that purpose. All doubtful cases, or matters which I am unable to verify at all, or can not verify for the present, have been put in the 'Doubtful' Column.

It was impossible to deal with the question of cases excluding Conscious Telepathy, because I could of course not remember my thoughts at each moment of the sittings, and the most careful classification would have been entirely misleading. The great majority are not so explicable.

Additional remarks on the tables themselves follow where required.

The heading 'Other Tests, References, and Details,' requires explanation. Every separate point has been entered in the various columns. Take, for instance, the first evidence recorded in the Griffiths Sitting. I was described as 'sitting in a forked tree,' 'by the seaside,' 'with another boy,' 'a little taller than myself,' 'dressed in a Norfolk Coat.' Five separate facts are here given, and they are each counted as such; the first four, being correct, are included in that column, and the

fifth has been put under the 'Doubtful' column, because I do not know how the boy was dressed.

The Book-test has a table to itself, and is entirely excluded from the other tables—including the description of the communicator, which, though mixed up with other parts of the Leonard Sitting, has been kept separate.

TABLE I.

Nature of the Communication.	Identified Understood.	Incorrect.	Doubtful, Awaiting Verification, or Impossible to Verify.
Names and Initials.	38	1	
Descriptions of Persons clearly recognised.	16	Nil.	
Other Tests, References, and Details.	160	14	
Total Correct, Incorrect, and Doubtful.	214		

In the following table, the first column deals with the cases where in the course of a sitting Telepathy has undoubtedly occurred in respect of some incident. The second deals with cases where Telepathy from the Sub-conscious Mind of the Sitter seems impossible, and the third, with those where it seems impossible in respect of any other living person. As a matter of fact the Book-test is the only perfectly clear case of this at present. The column headed 'Doubtful' includes all cases

where, if I were able to identify the person or circumstances concerned, Telepathy from my Sub-conscious Mind would be excluded. The last column contains all cases which involve a strained and improbable, but not positively impossible, use of the Telepathy Theory in order to explain them by that means. Of course this is a matter of opinion, rather than of fact, and the column reflects my personal opinion, with which the reader may or may not agree.

TABLE II.

Nature of the Communication.	Cases where Telepathy seems to have occurred.	Cases excluding Telepathy from the Sitter.	Cases ditto from other Living Minds.	Doubtful Cases.	Cases involving strain or improbability if explained by Telepathy.
Names and Initials.	Nil.	3	Nil.	5	Nil.
Descriptions of Persons clearly recognised.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	1	1
Other Tests, References, and Details.	2	21	Nil.	31	14
Totals.	2	24	0	37	15

The following table refers to the Book-test alone. Every point regarding the description of the Communicator, the identity of the room, the positions of the furniture, and the position and

contents of the book has been recorded and counted in the figures. Now that I have analysed the information in this way, I am more than ever astonished that I was ever misled by comparatively minor points into failing to see to whom the personal description really applied.

TABLE III.

Description of.	No. of Items.	Correct.	Discrepancies.	Doubtful.
Communicator.	30	25	1	4
Room.	7	4 ^e	1 2*	—
Positions, etc. of Furniture.	6	6	—	—
Position and Contents of Book.	12	12 ^e	—	—
Other References and Details.	6	5	—	1
Total.	61	52	4	5

* These were partially right, not wholly incorrect.

APPENDIX D

When first this book was sent to press, I expected to receive and correct the proofs before leaving England. This has not proved to be possible, and the proofs have been sent to me overseas.

This enables me to make some important comments upon and additions to the Record in Part II.

The Reader will recollect that in the Leonard Sitting several allusions were made to the journey I was to make, and to circumstances that I should find and incidents that would occur after my arrival at my destination. I will now bring these matters up to date. For the reader's convenience, I will quote the pages on which will be found matters now to be referred to.

Page 208. A description is given of the circumstances of the death of a young man killed in France. I have now been able to ascertain from his brother exact details of his death. At the time I knew nothing, though I believed that I had heard

that he had been killed by a shell. The passage in question reads as follows :—

“ He seems to have fallen into an unconscious state—dizzy—stunned. If not for the stunned feeling he might have felt pain. He didn’t expect to pass out when he did ; he thought he might have passed on another occasion, but he didn’t think he would then : he might have expected to . . . ”

I have before me a letter from his brother dated Dec. 12th 1919. The passages referring to the death are as follows :—

“ You ask me for the details of —’s death. Well, I will tell you them as we heard them from his half-section C—— P—— They were in action at Gauche Wood. On the 12th of March at a place called Heaudicourt, they received orders to take over the trenches at Gauche Wood.” Here follow details of the next few days’ movements, in which they saw heavy fighting. “ But when they reached Merri-court,” the letter continues, “ the Germans were breaking through Dernancourt. They were then told to hold on (it would only be a little while) till the Australians relieved them. This was on the 27th of March. They suffered a terrible bombardment : they were firing all night long but no relief came. The following morning at about 10 o’clock, they were again ordered to retire. Suddenly they

heard a terrific noise go up from their own side. This was the first sign of the Australians. Then —'s division went towards the village, and it was here that poor — met his end. As they were making for the village, which was very small, they passed several of the Australian supports and reserves, and as you, of course, know, the German shells were landing away back behind the lines for miles. Well, several of the Australians on approaching the lines were killed or wounded, and as —'s division was going out they of course stopped to help the Aussies. So they got a stretcher and picked up a wounded Australian, and as the village was about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles off, they knew there would be a dressing station not far off. There were five of our boys together, —, C—, P—, J—, and two other chaps. They managed to get a man to the dressing tent and as they were very tired and hungry, they decided to have a rest and get something to eat. They got a few tins of beef from the Australians, and they also got some biscuits, and — had some Oxo cubes Mother had sent him. C— P— went to a well and got some water and — made a fire, and then they commenced their meal. After they had finished they prepared to move on, and — said he was going over to fill his water bottle. He had just filled it and was coming back when a shell

exploded a few feet from him. C— P— ran over to him and saw he was breathing, but could neither speak nor move. Then the others came up with their officer, and when he saw ——— was dead, he gave orders for him to be buried.”

It is I, of course, who have suppressed the names in this sad and stirring little narrative. “The reader can judge for himself of its close correspondence with what Mrs. Leonard told me. I made no mention of this book, or of having had any communication about ———’s death, to his brother. When I remark that the only persons who knew of these details were many thousand miles away, they will again feel the insistence of the question—

Can Telepathy be reasonably held to explain such things?

* * * * *

Page 219. A letter received from the East and then somewhat South. The latitude of London is 52 deg. and that of Omsk is 55 deg. Therefore there is a slight inaccuracy here. “

* * * * *

Page 220. The medium represented the Communicator as giving me a sort of plan with lines and figures on it. “Something I should see when I got away.” “Some kind of plan.”

This very day I have been making a sketch plan

for additions to a certain building, and though no plan has been given to me, I think I may say that it is certain that such a plan will in the not far distant future be given to me for consideration in connection with this addition to the building. I expected nothing of the kind when in England.

* * * * * *

Page 220. "About the journey . . . gives me the feeling of going to one place and then going on further. Not just calling—stopping a bit and then going on further."

I had to stop ~~twenty~~^{three} four hours at the port of departure after leaving London. I also stopped a few days at an intermediate place before finally proceeding to the place called R.

* * * * * *

Page 224. "Board " and " Committee." I have had to do with both these bodies, but I should in fairness say that I expected to, and that at present nothing special has been taking place in regard to them.

Page 224. Arrangement with Bank. I have had to make certain special arrangements with a Bank—with two, in fact—with reference to property left by my father.

* * * * * *

Page 227. A place called M. There is such a

place near here, which I had overlooked till I returned here, but I cannot say that I see anything but a bare possibility of any special connection with it. It was not clear whether the "Assassination" referred to the place called M in particular.

This matter of the Assassination, however, is the one really puzzling and unsatisfactory feature in the Records. If the reference is to the place called M, there has been no assassination there, or murder of a "sort of public man" or of any one else. Several years ago, there was a very sensational murder there—not of a public man, and my father knew of it, though I should doubt his remembering the name of the place or even the fact. But this was said most explicitly to be quite recent.

On the other hand if the reference is to the Colony, there has been no assassination in this part of the world. A prominent public man died, somewhere about the time of the Leonard Sitting, in this country, but all I can say is that if he was assassinated, the fact has been most completely concealed from the public! This information can only be described as being absolutely and entirely incorrect, and as having no foundation that I can see. I can but point out that neither the Book-test nor any other reference ceases to be correct because this this one is incorrect. If the Reader asks me how it

is that an apparently obviously wholly incorrect piece of information should have been given with such definite detail along with such tests as the Book-test particularly, I hasten to assure him that I cannot tell him. I am acquainted with the orthodox Spiritualist explanation of such awkward discrepancies: it is that "Spirits have no idea of time, and that they often sense things as to happen soon which actually occur long after." This solution leaves me quite cold, and would hardly account for a definite statement that not only this event had happened quite recently, but the Communicator wondered whether I might not have heard of it already. Another explanation might be put forward in saying that the Control was evidently procuring much of her information in the form of symbols which she had to interpret. But in the first place can this be reconciled with the words, "He keeps saying assassination. He does not call it murder. Assassination, that's the word he uses." In the second place, one wonders why the interpretation should have been so entirely wrong in this one case, while so right in others. The more sceptical critic would on the other hand say that the whole thing emanated from the medium's own mind. But neither is that explanation quite satisfactory. If this were the case, and

the idea were that it was a piece of intentional deception (a thing, by the way, of which I am convinced Mrs. Leonard is incapable) what folly it would be to invent a story foredoomed to disproof in every particular ! I do however entertain the possibility that such things occur through some intrusion of some sub-conscious association of ideas in the medium's mind which obtrude themselves into other and genuine communications. I would refer the reader in this connection to pp. 45 and 50. The final possibility is that the communication was genuine, but that the Communicator himself (not the medium's Control) was labouring under some misapprehension, and supposed that some assassination had taken place in that country which had occurred somewhere else, say. That does not seem at all an impossible thing when one remembers what misunderstandings frequently occur on matters of hearsay, but it is lacking in any evidence in this case. I do not at any rate remember that any particular event of the kind occurred at that time.

This incident of the " assassination " reminds me that a word of caution may be necessary, to some people, as to the exact degree of weight they should attach to descriptions of séances and sittings by what I may call enthusiastic Spiritualists. It is

the reflection of how perfectly easy it would have been for me to suppress this incident altogether from the Records, as soon as I felt sure that it had turned out a failure, which tempts me to sound this little note of warning. People not at all intentionally dishonest sometimes have, I fear, a convenient habit of either forgetting or explaining away to themselves discrepancies in things of this kind. The result sometimes is that other persons especially critical and sceptical persons, hear much of the successes and little of the failures. I have been amused sometimes to hear myself from such people the unbroken chain of successful marvels which they have to relate, and I have felt as convinced that there has been "a catch somewhere" as I am convinced, that many mediumistic communications need to be received with the greatest caution. I repeat what I have said before, that only genuine test messages are in my opinion quite safely to be relied upon, even if they are.

* * * * *

The missing Safety Razor which occupied so prominent a position in two of the sittings is still, as far as I know, missing; at any rate, I have no news of it yet.

* * * * *

Page 224. It will be noticed that there is a suppression in the Record on this page. Certain things were said in this part of the Leonard Sitting about personal matters at the place called R. It is not possible to publish them. I can only say that I have not as yet been able to substantiate their truth, while I have equally been unable to discover that they are unfounded.

One or two minor points in this suppressed portion were correct enough, but the most important remains "untestable."

* * * * *

Page 227. But on this page there is another suppressed portion. A certain initial was given which I recognized. For certain reasons I asked whether the connection with this person would be a pleasant one. The answer was "It will be now . . . You need not anticipate anything disagreeable." There was a strong accent on the word *now*, so much so that I underlined it twice in the original record made at the time of the sitting. Of this person's name and certain circumstances my father knew in 1917. At and previous to that time, the connection with this person had been the very reverse of pleasant, and I anticipated and always should have anticipated something unpleasant. Since my return, the information given

me through Mrs. Leonard has turned out surprisingly and most pleasingly accurate.

Page 218. An interesting point has occurred to me here. I identified the person named G on the lower portion of this page, but had no information as to the place called L. I now wonder whether L was a place at all, for it had not occurred to me at the time to connect with the L the fact that the surname of this person (whose Christian name was G) was L. It is of course a surmise, and I have not therefore included the L as a correct item in any of the Tables in Appendix C.

* * * * *

As I have the proofs of this book before me, I have included the results recorded in this Appendix in the Tables in Appendix C, so as to bring them also up to date.



GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN THIS BOOK

Those definitions marked with an asterisk have been copied from the Glossary appearing in "Human Personality, and its Survival of Bodily Death," by the late F. W. H. Myers, and the terms were in many cases invented by him. The remaining definitions have been made by the author to explain terms in use among spiritualists.†

*Agent**. The person who seems to initiate a telepathic transmission.

Apport. A word used by Spiritualists to express the production at a séance by supernatural means of objects which were not previously there.

Clairaudience. The seeming internal perception of words or other sounds not normally audible.

Clairvoyance. The apparent perception, as though objectively, of the appearance of a spirit, object, symbol, or scene not normally visible.†

*Control**. This word is used of the Intelligence which purports to communicate messages which are written or uttered by the automatist, sensitive, or medium.

†Myers employed more strictly psychologic and restricted definitions of these two terms. They are defined here more in accordance with their most general and popular use.

Control. The term used by Spiritualists to denote a discarnate spirit who invades or takes possession of the organism or of certain motor centres of the organism of a medium.

Direct Voice. The term used by Spiritualists to denote an oral communication by a discarnate spirit speaking directly and not through the vocal organs of a medium.

Discarnate.* Disembodied—opposed to Incarnate.

Hallucination.* Any sensory perception which has no objective counterpart within the field of vision, hearing etc., is called a hallucination.

Hypnosis. The condition of a subject under the influence of Hypnotic Control—often called the Hypnotic Trance.

Incarnate. Dwelling in the flesh. Existing in a physical body.

Materialization. A word used by Spiritualists to denote the process by which a spirit is deemed to be able under certain conditions to gather round himself matter derived from the body of a materializing medium so as to build up a visible appearance of the form or part of the form of a human being. Also used of the form or part of form so built up.

Medium.* A person through whom communication is deemed to be carried on between living men and spirits of the Departed. It is often better replaced by 'automatic or sensitive.'

Planchette. An apparatus used for the writing of messages purporting to come from spirits of the departed, and supposed to be manipulated by supernormal energy conveyed through a person with mediumistic power.

Psychometry. A word used by spiritualists to denote the faculty or act of perceiving facts in the life of a living or other person or of describing spirits etc., by the assistance of an article which has been in close contact with the body of a living person. Permaterial Cognition is suggested as a better term.

Sitter. A person having an interview with a medium for purpose of obtaining messages from the Deceased, investigating Psychic Phenomena.

Spirit Photography. Causing the registration by supernormal means on a photographic negative, of a form alleged to be that of a discarnate spirit and not visible normally.

Sub-conscious. Of that part of the mind postulated to be Subliminal, or below the threshold of the Conscious Mind.

Subliminal.* Of thoughts, feelings, etc., lying beneath the ordinary threshold (limen) of consciousness, as opposed to Supraliminal, lying above the threshold.

Suggestion. An idea or impression conveyed to the Conscious or Sub-conscious mind of another by speech, writing, sign, or thought.

Supernormal.* Of a faculty or phenomenon which transcends ordinary experience.

Telepathy.* The communication of impressions of any kind from one mind to another independent of the recognised channels of sense.

Trance. A condition of unconsciousness in a medium believed by Spiritualists to be due to the temporary dispossession of his mind by an invading Intelligence which substitutes its personality for that of the medium in the organism of the latter. Also the condition obtaining during hypnosis.

Veridical.* Of Hallucinations when they correspond to real events happening elsewhere and unknown to the percipient.

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